Commercial Video Game Outlets and Juvenile Crime

A Juvenile Crime Prevention Project Report

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COMMERCIAL VIDEO GAME OUTLETS AND JUVENILE CRIME

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FOREWORD

Effective use of this report will be enhanced by taking the time to review the Table of Contents and this Foreword prior to moving on to the body of the work. An effort has been made to construct the report so that those with specialized interests may proceed directly to sections which are most relevant for them. Nevertheless, readers are urged to refer back to the sections cited as the sources from which particular recommendations are drawn. In addition, the Conclusions and Recommendations are limited to those directly relevant to the initiating concerns of the study. A careful reading of the Findings Section will provide information on many other issues which may be of interest to certain readers.

Chapter 1 introduces the problems which the study addresses and states the research goals and theoretical considerations.

Chapter 2 reviews the current literature on CVGO's and studies of CVGO-youth crime linkage and analyzes media coverage of the issue.

Chapter 3 describes the current state of the video arcade industry in British Columbia.

Chapter 4 describes and discusses research methods and limitations, including sampling choices, techniques and instruments used.

Chapter 5 reports on findings including: community perceptions of CVGO's; description of CVGO types, locations, social and physical environments and supervision patterns; young player types and activities; young player CVGO spending and playing funds acquisition patterns; as well as a discussion on police evidence and activity with regard to CVGO's.

Section 5.5 of Chapter 5 provides a description and discussion of community responses to CVGO's and its relation to Provincial Statutes and Municipal Bylaws, as well as a discussion of industry responses to community regulatory activity.

Chapter 6 reports the major conclusions of the study.

Chapter 7 reports the major recommendations of the study, devised for particular interest groups, i.e. Provincial and muncipal officials, police, parents, industry members and youth workers.

Appendix A1 includes a listing of all information sources, types, research techniques and sample sizes.

Appendix B1 is a summary of all communities polled, including information on numbers of outlets, bylaw activity, and complaint and response patterns.

Appendix C1 contains citations of relevant B.C. statutes.

Appendix C2 contains copies of various CVGO specific municipal bylaws.

The bibliography contains citations of both published and unpublished printed sources used in the course of this study.

The author wishes to express his appreciation for the generous assistance provided by police, merchants, municipal officials, and hundreds of other citizens (youth and adults).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study began with an interest in determining whether commercial video game outlets (arcades, gamesrooms, corner stores, etc.) were, in some way, generating criminal activity on the part of young people in B.C. communities. Reports were appearing in the media, alleging increases in crime around arcades including: vandalism, shoplifting, B and E's and other instances of petty theft. A few parents told stories of how their children were stealing money from home to play the "addictive" games. Some parents and schools were urging that commercial video game outlets (CVGO's) be kept at a distance from school grounds because it was feared that children would waste money and time at the outlets, spend lunch money, and be late for or skip school. There seemed to be a general impression that the outlets were "hangouts" for troublesome children in the community and a related fear that other young people might be negatively influenced as a result of association through attendance at the outlets. Police in many communities were actively opposing arcades, urging increased regulations and preparing "internal" reports to town and city councils alleging criminal association and activity as well as drug and alcohol use in relation to arcades.

Regulatory efforts were being encouraged by some businessmen and residents located near outlets and resisted by outlet operators, both in council meetings and, failing that, through the courts. Some communities banned arcades while adjacent communities chose not to increase regulation.

Many municipalities were seeking ways to respond. Old pool room and amusement centre by-laws were being dusted off, often found to be inadequate, revised, applied, and often revised again. These regulatory efforts were taking place at the same time as the numbers of games and locations continued to increase. The great variation in community responses suggested that the true nature of the problem remained unclear. Evidence supporting the negative allegations about the outlets was inconsistent and perhaps sensationalized, raising the possibility that council's regulatory efforts might be misdirected or unnecessary. What was clear was that the first problem that had to be addressed was a lack of information.

1.2 RESEARCH GOALS

The primary goals of this study are to:

1. Provide a general overview of CVGO's in B.C., including their current legal status;

2. Present the opinions of interested groups regarding perceived CVGO related problems and actions taken;

3. Evaluate current evidence of the problems;

4. Generate specific data on arcade activity, including description of players and young people's income acquisition and spending as it relates to arcades.

5. Make use of the above to generate recommendations for consideration and action on CVGO's in B.C. communities.

The concrete issue which initiated the study involved a concern with the amounts and sources of money which young people were spending in playing video games. The games cost from 25¢ to 50¢ and may last for only a few minutes. Playing at these rates for an hour or two can therefore require the expenditure of sums which must be considered substantial for a young person. As many young people were thought to be playing beyond an hour or two a week it seemed reasonable to assume that the vast majority of young people do not have access to the amounts of money this would require. If this were the case, then the possibility arises that the money is being acquired through illegitimate means. Thus, the first two substansive questions are:

1. How much money are young people spending at CVGO's?

2. Where is the money coming from?

These questions raise several related issues, revolving around pressure and opportunities to use illegitimate means of acquiring money to play. It is understood that the games are powerfully attractive to young people and that large numbers gather to play them. It seems possible that this congregation of the young might create conditions which would increase motivation, knowledge and opportunities to obtain playing money illegitimately. Young players might be exposed to those older or more experienced in "street life" and thereby be encouraged or assisted in petty theft activity. Thus, a third substansive question was formulated:

3. Are criminal activities encouraged or assisted through participation at arcades. If so, what are these activities and how are they encouraged?

While these three questions express the core concerns of the study, early investigatory activity revealed that certain sectors of the communities were distressed about the impact of the CVGO's on the young. Educators were anxious about influences on truancy and absenteeism. Merchants had concerns about shoplifting and petty theft, vandalism or rowdiness which might discourage their customers. Police expressed concern about the types of people that "hung out" at CVGO's, drug or theft activities and the general problem of "youth congregation".

Given the results of this early investigative activity and the apparent lack of clarity as to exactly what sorts of problems CVGO's present to communities, the work was extended to solicit concerns of interest groups which might fall outside the area of finances or possible theft. It was clear that these perceptions could affect community regulatory activity and should be taken into account. (See Methods Section 3 - Samples and Techniques).

1.3 SUMMARY OF METHODS

This inquiry, then, is intended to assist the policy makers and other citizens concerned with the existence of CVGO's in their community by providing the following information:

1. A review of relevant literature regarding the association between CVGO's and criminal activity, as well as an examination of media treatment of the issue.

2. A survey of responses taken by 54 B.C. communities to determine the numbers of outlets, perceptions of the problem, by-law or other activity and current difficulties.

3. On-site investigation of outlets in 10 B.C. communities.

4. Interviews and literature from game manufacturers, distributors, operators and locations, as well as material from industry associations and publications.

5. Interviews with police, municipal officials, school personnel, parents, lawyers, social workers, merchants, other government agencies and young players themselves.

This information is intended to help interested parties to clarify their understanding of the problem, and if necessary, to take action which will be effective in their communities. While information provided on any particular community may be insufficient on which to base action, the intention is to provide a general review of a number of communities' responses, various types of evidence regarding the problem and options available as responses to the problem.

An effort has been made to approach a wide range of community interest groups so as to present a fair picture of their particular positions and conclusions, thereby making the major perspectives on the situation available to those who may have been exposed only to a more restricted view of the issue.

1.4 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study is not determined or guided by any formal theory of juvenile crime or delinquency. Therefore, one should not expect to find any such theory confirmed or rejected herein. There is significant disagreement about the causes of juvenile delinquency and a study such as this one cannot pretend to resolve those matters. However, it is interesting to note that a number of "formal" theories of delinquency are reflected in "common sense" assumptions about the linkage between CVGO's and youth/crime activity (see Conclusions and Discussion).

The study does not assert or test a causal relationship between delinquent behaviour and CVGO's; rather it is meant to explore the possibility that there may be some association between the two and, if so, to describe that association.

Although the study is not a test of "formal" theory, its conclusions can have pragmatic value in identifying elements which may make some CVGO's problematic and recommending ameliorative changes.

The work is informed by an awareness that the significant attention currently directed towards CVGO's in the absence of similar attention at other locations of youth congregation, could lead to selective perceptions of an incidence of anti-social or criminal youth behaviour linked to CVGO's. Some effort is also made to take into account how the "interest" positions of various respondents might affect their perception of the relationship between CGVO's and youth activities, perhaps leading some to over-generalize from isolated incidents.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH LITERATURE

A search for previous systematic work on the possible association between CVGO's and youth/crime activity was somewhat un-productive. Four computer data bases were searched for citations on video arcades, including: Social Science Citation Index (65--Sociology, 66--Education, 67--psychology) and the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. Some runs were also made to access research on other youth congregation points such as pool halls or fast food outlets, again with no useful product.

Librarians from U.B.C., the Justice Institute and the Ministry of Attorney General provided generous assistance in regard to these and other searches but were unable to find any relevant materials.

Academic specialists at U.B.C. and Simon Fraser University were approached for leads on research related to video arcades, youth congregation in general and the specifics of child or teenage income acquisition and expenditure but here again, information appeared to be non-existent or not directly relevant. Departments of criminology, geography, sociology, psychology, economics, education and home economics were polled. The typical response was that no relevant information was available but that some could probably be expected in the near future. Citation indexes in the area were thought to be 18 months behind, so obtaining access to such information, should it exist, would be extremely difficult.

Inquiries were also made to the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and the Consumer Association of Canada. Only one useful lead was provided by the Ministry of Education - to look into the new consumer education course materials - but again the available information was minimal.

The directors of two North American Coin Game Operator/Distributor Organizations and the publishers of two North American coin-machine industry magazines were contacted. While all supplied some useful information on the current state of the industry, none were able to provide information on any systematic studies confirming or rejecting the association of criminal behaviour and arcade participation. They did, however, provide suggestions that eventually led to an investment house study produced in New York and an independent research project in California. Neither of the researchers had been able to find any studies on arcades and criminal behaviour, but both provided information on the industry and the players.

The Bernstein Research report, "The Video Game Industry - Strategic Analysis", is essentially a description of the current financial situation in the industry. The cautious and detailed analysis provided in this work suggests that it be taken more seriously than "Industry" supplied figures, which have a built-in bias, i.e. claims of high income-profit volumes for the industry as a whole or for particular machines are assumed to function to promote new entrants at the operator or locations levels or increase the purchase of these machines. The report is the basis for much of the CVGO industry section of this report.

The California study, conducted by B. David Brooks, has not been published but is in Xerox circulation. Dr. Brooks recently presented his work at a Harvard

Graduate School of Education Conference on "Video Games and Human Development". The major work consisted of a survey of 973 young players, 651 of which were males aged 10-18 and 322 of which were females aged 10-18. For the purposes of this study that work will be termed the "Brooks" investigation.

Dr. Brooks has done more extensive research on video outlets than any other source discovered in the course of this report. In late 1982, prior to initiating his work, he checked scientific journals, the National Education Association, the National Parent Teachers Association, numerous law enforcement and government persons and the video game industry, finding the same answer everywhere: no data available. Phone contact with him in February of 1983 indicated that he had been even less successful than this investigator in locating any such data.

Finally, city police and R.C.M.P. research units in B.C. and several other provinces were approached. The research which they had acquired or conducted generally consisted of collection of newspaper articles or informal reports from within their departments. One exception was an article being circulated by the Coordinated Law Enforcement Unit of this Ministry which cited a New York study of 102 video game parlours which found drug use at two-thirds of the sites investigated. (See 2.3 Police Studies and Statistics on CVGO - Crime Linkage). Most Canadian police departments did not seem to have data collection processes which were capable of collating the kind of statistics necessary for examining the arcade/crime connection and all juvenile crime statistics tended to have methodological problems which made their interpretation troublesome. These factors made use of the few existing reports or statistics very problematic. Several studies were mentioned several times but attempts to acquire these studies have

have met with limited successs. These studies and the general role of police in regards to the CVGO will be discussed in the Findings section of this report.

A combination of university, police and social service agency contacts did lead to a study conducted in the Port Coquitlam, Coquitlam, Port Moody area which was done just as the work reported here was being completed. Although not published, a Xeroxed report has been circulated. This work consisted of interviews with 323 students, aged 10 - 19, some informal outlet observations, interviews with 33 near-arcade residents and a report of a conference involving industry representatives, the primary researchers, police, social workers and an audience of local social service workers. For our purposes this will be called the POCOMO study.

In sum, there seemed to be an insignificant amount of prior research on the association between CVGO's and criminal activity which could serve as a preliminary guide to this work. That which was eventually acquired during the course of the study will be compared with the present findings as appropriate.

2.2 CVGO's AND THE MEDIA

Media representations of the CVGO phenomena are important because:

1. They indicate the pervasive interest and concern with CVGO's on the part of many segments of society.

2. They provide a source of information on alleged CVGO impacts on young community members and municipal council or court responses.

3. They are perhaps the primary source of information on CVGO's for most people and therefore can be assumed to have some influence on public attitudes towards CVGO's.

Recently, the President of the United States, in an appeal for more military aid for Central America, characterized the $600,000,000.00 being requested as only ten per cent of the amount spent in the U.S. on commerical video games. This statement is an indication of the broad awareness of the growth of CVGO's and the general assumption of the vast sums spent in such outlets.

At this point in time, almost every major popular magazine in North Amercia has presented some comment on the CVGO phenomenon. Time has instituted a video section. At least four video game magazines for players are being published. Contemporary youth novels are depicting the youth/video----community/council conflict (Video Wars).

CVGO's are advertised on T.V. There are regular T.V. programs featuring game contests. T.V. interview shows such as Donahue and The Neil-Lehrer Report have featured discussions of the possible criminogenic impact of CVGO's on young people.

Atari circulates annual collections of newspaper clippings of editorials, letters to the editor, and articles relevant ot the CVGO's. These collections include an increasing ratio of "positive" to "negative" opinion.

Several hundred of the thousands of North American newspapers and magazine articles on CVGO's have been collected and reviewed for the present study. They consist of: "entertainment" articles which report visits to arcades as "curiousities"; reports on community efforts to regulate CVGO's; court decisions on the legality of such efforts; allegations of positive or detrimental physical, psychological and social effects; editorial responses and reports of record breaking games; use of CVGO's for charity; reports of enormous profits fo the industry. The vast majority are reports of opinion, arcade descriptions or reports of municipal actions.

The focus of the present analysis will be on print media coverage in B.C. communities, primarily as represented in the Vancouver Sun and Victoria Times. It is assumed that these papers are most influential on B.C. public opinion and reflect both the degree and the nature of interest in CVGO's.

Some representative headlines include: "Video Games Thieves Nabbed"; "Video Big? We're Talking Billions"; "VIDEO INVASION"; "Video Games Zapping Kids"; "City Wins Battle of Video Games"; "Screen Demons"; "Victorious Video"; "War Declared on Games"; "Irate Parents Strike Back at Coin-Eating Video Games"; "Children Steal Rent to Feed Video Habit"; "Video Junkies Rob their Mums"; "Video Junkies Hooked on Crime". While there were a number of other articles with less inflammatory headlines - "Arcades Law Before Court"; "Video Games Confined"; "Video Ban Stays as Problem" - even these suggest a combative, troublesome, possibly illegal situation.

One must read further into the material to realize that many of the situations described refer to Tokyo, Montreal, Calgary, the Phillipines and not to B.C. or to find that the "scary" headline is followed by a somewhat positive report on a particular arcade or the youths there. Most report only a single case as a problem, either one arcade out of hundreds or one child out of thousands. Therefore, few of the reports provide strong evidence for the general presence of such problems (e.g., conflict, theft or drugs) in B.C. communities or that CVGO's cause them. However people might be left with such an impression if a brief view of this material was their only source of information on these matters.

While it is the intention of this report to focus primarily on the possible "criminogenic" impact of the CVGO's on young people, the many media reports asserting other negative psychological, moral, physical, ethical and other social impacts on the young deserve some attention because they create a "tone" which easily becomes an assumption about criminogenic impat. These also tend to be somewhat horrific single incident accounts, i.e. boy burns down two family homes to stay near favourite arcade: "Pac-Man Fanatic Guilty".

Some, however, issue from "scientific authorities" and may be expected to receive a high degree of credence. However, there was no systematic evidence that claims of arcade "arthritis", "epilepsy", "adrenalin highs" or induced violence" were valid beyond very exceptional cases where there were often some predisposing conditions. The Surgeon General of the U.S. issued a very threatening report asserting a wide range of physical and psychological dangers in CVGO participation but, when asked for evidence, admitted that he had none but expected that a lot would soon be showing up in the medical journals.

An overview of the media coverage over time indicates a general pattern in the type of news coverage about CVGO's. When the estensive expansion of CVGO's occurred in the Lower Mainland several years ago, early treatments focussed on the uniqueness of the experience, exploring the connection with the computer phenomena as a whole and displaying an air of curiosity and fascination. Then as various communties began to express concerns about their local CVGO's, press coverage began to focus almost exclusively on these concerns, resulting in a negative image for CVGO's. Recently, more reportage of record-breaking games, contests, and other "player-positive" views seems to be evident. Many of these take the form of promoting CVGO play as an introduction to the world of computers, familiarizing the young with display and manipulation devices which are precursers to instruments which these future adults will have to utilize in their work careers. Positive articles also speak of "increased hand-eye" coordination, the sense of excitement and achievement which play may engender in youngsters.

One recurrent concern related to this positive function of video games is that the minimal participation of young females will serve to their "disadvantage" in competing for future occupations. This was the thrust of the most recent (June 1983) CVGO article in the Sun. This is an interesting reversal in tone, the defined problem no longer being arcade associated crime but rather a lack of participation by young females.

A perusal of the newspaper files on juvenile delinquency over the past decades indicates that every five or six years one issue emerges about negative activities on the part of young people. It receives wide attention, then seems to subside (e.g. pool halls, T.V., drug use and being out late at night). The activities do not disappear, they just seem to fade from public view. It may be that CVGO's are the most current case in this pattern.

It is important to comment briefly on the possibly differential effect on public opinion of "negative" as opposed to "positive" media commentary on video game playing. A common sense understanding of media impact on the public indicates that just as "bad" news makes headlines more consistently than "good" news, so "bad" news may have a more striking effect on public opinion than does "good" news.

This type of impact was found over and over in polling municipal officials, school authorities, parents and others throughout the Province. Respondents reported their opinions regarding the negative character of CVGO's but often could provide no specific examples from within their own communities. Sometimes reports from other countries were cited as examples of what was going on in the Lower Mainland — and so could be expected in their community — or, as "what goes on in all arcades". Rarely if ever, was any media material cited by respondents in support of CVGO's.

In sum, an examination of media treatment of CVGO's suggests that: there is wide public interest and awareness of the presence and growth of CVGO's; material cited in reports tends to be inadequate for drawing conclusions or generalizations and, "bad" news about arcades is more widely attended to and therefore more influential on public opinion than "good" news about them.

2.3 POLICE STUDIES AND STATISTICS ON CVGO - CRIME LINKAGE

As already mentioned, police and other respondents occasionally referred to "studies" which were claimed to provide evidence of a CVGO-youth crime linkage. These proved very difficult to obtain and when limited access was achieved, the research data itself "could not be recovered".

The most frequently mentioned study was "the one done in Nanaimo". It had been suggested that this study showed that crime rates were higher around arcades. Numerous contacts with the Nanaimo police revealed that no such study had ever been conducted; however, they felt that their new computer facilities made such an investigation possible. This investigator therefore requested that such an analysis be carried out. Although the police agreed to do such an analysis, computor breakdown, reorganization and other priorities have delayed its completion to date.

A December 15, 1982 article in the Calgary Herald, "Video Junkies Hooked on Crime", reported that in one police district, "the average number of housebreakings was 13.4/1000 homes, during a 45 day period recently. But near Arcades, the ratio "skyrocketed" to 36.5 forced entries/1000 homes, statistics show". However, an earlier portion of the article claimed that "city police statistics show that a home within an eight block radius of one of the approximately 100 arcades operating in the city is almost three times as likely to be a target of housebreaking as anywhere else in the city."

Phone contact with the police officers responsible for the study revealed the following: the study actually involved only two of the city's many arcades; there was no way to prove that these rates represented increases because there was no information on rates in these areas prior to the presence of the arcades; no other statistical details were available; these particular arcades were known by police to be in locations already considered in "trouble" spots in the city and were the focus of current police investigations regarding stolen goods and drug sales; the opinion that any MacDonald's Restaurant or any other congregation point could produce the same B and E rates was expressed by police.

Given this information, one must conclude that the information is not sufficient to support any claim that increased crime rates may be generally linked to arcades.

A current article in the R.C.M.P. Gazette (Vol 45, No. 1, 1983) "Arcades and Slot Machines", reported "estimates" from Regina and Saskatoon asserting "that within a ten block radius of an arcade, break, enter and thefts, thefts of cash from purses, cars, paper boys and youngsters, as well as assaults and robberies have increased from 100 per cent to 1000 per cent". Phone and mail contact with the author of the Gazette article revealed that the "source of the statistics is unable to provide the actual figures and circumstances without conducting a massive search of the work". Therefore, this investigator is unable to evaluate the conclusions of the estimates or the methods of their production. The Gazette article itself is somewhat negative about arcades in general, characterizing players as "video game addicts" and warning about the threat of illegal video slot machine devices and video gambling. No such machines or activities have been observed or reported in B.C.

The most systematic and competent study concerning the criminogenic effects of CVGO's is one currently being circulated to B.C. police departments by the Coordinated Law Enforcement Unit of the Ministry. The study involves a New York City investigation of 102 "randomly" selected video game parlours. It found drug use and/or sales at two-thirds of the selected sites. The primary issue here is whether these results may be generalized to B.C. communities. It must be noted that New York City has districts where hard and soft drugs are openly sold on the streets. Drivers can slowly proceed down the street, ordering and receiving their chosen drugs through the car window as they make their way along or stop and make purchases at "drug stores" in local tenements. Given that this level of drug availability and acceptibility is not know to be the case in any B.C. community, one must be cautious about generalizing any other drug related activites to this Province. In addition, since no comparable studies of other congregation points is provided, there is no way to conclude that this level of drug activity is related only to video parlours.

The "Brooks" studies, consisting of both player interviews and unobtrusive observation in Los Angeles and Orange Counties of California, found no such linkages between arcades and drug or theft activity. As these urban-suburban environments are somewhat more comparable to B.C. communities they might be able to be more approximately generalized in this Province.

At any rate, the former studies, including those whose existence has been verified and those whose existence has not, do seem to be having some influence on police perceptions of possible drug and B and E links to B.C. CVGO's, leading some police personnel to suspect the presence of such a linkage. Their perceptions and less formal reports of such connections will be discussed in the Findings Section.

2.4 CONCLUSIONS

The review of extant materials on CVGO's reveals many allegations of associated problems, criminal and otherwise, for young participants and for society, but rarely any recoverable substantiation. This results in severe confusion for the serious investigator. It may be that such commentary is better understood as statements of opinion, concern and anxiety rather than as evidence that such effects are real.

It is possible that the "video explosion", greatly attractive to the young and highly visible, has produced a defensive reaction on the part of adults and other institutions. Some genuinely concerned citizens and "experts" may be over-reacting to the highly visible effects and to the occassional vocal complainant, without thoroughly and rationally investigating the issues. It is also possible that CVGO's "bring into the open" youth activities which have occurred in more covert environments in the past or simply made them more publicly visible through the concentration of people and activites that CVGO congregations may produce.

At any rate, although such media and police reports generally do not substantiate the occurrence of such problems around arcades, some evidently do occur. A fundamental task of this report is to attempt to discover whether they occur with significant frequency and what conditions appear to be conducive to their occurrence.

3. THE COMMERCIAL VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY IN B.C.

The commercial video game industry is roughly ten years old. It began in the U.S. with the invention, production and distribution of "Pong". Soon, more elaborate types of games were being developed, generally being placed with pin ball and other coin operated games in bars and other amusement places. Over the last five years these new games have been displacing pin ball in amusement centres and other locations. One local distributor has reported that six years ago ninety per cent of his business was "pins" and in 1982 ninety-five per cent of that business is video.

In B.C., the network of distribution, leasing and management which had been established for mechanical games, such as pinball, has served the same function with regard to the new electronic game machines, although it is now dominated by the demands of the latter. This network has a four level structure:

1. manufacturers (primarily U.S. and Japanese)--those who actually produce the machines, including the established pin ball manufacturers such as Bally and Williars, as well as the new electronic game giant, Atari;

2. distributors--those who purchase wholesale from the manufacturers and retail equipment to the lower levels;

3. operators--those who purchase machines from distributors and lease to "locations", generally for a share of the"drop" (money inserted in the

machines by players);

4. locations--independent owner-managers who lease machines from operators for a share of the "drop" and pay the location overhead.

The "video" element of commercial coin-operated games has undergone enormous growth over the past four to five years, generating vast sums of money through the establishment of mall or "free standing street arcades" intended specifically for 25 to 50 video machines, or the replacement of most of the pin ball machines in traditional amusement locations. In addition, groups of three to four video games are being placed in corner stores, shopping centres, fast food restaurants and transportation centres. At present, some airlines (Pacific Western, for example) are placing games on the fold-down tables in planes themselves.

The combination of this vast, rapid and profitable growth has put severe strains on the traditional "coin-op" industry. While there are several national organizations of manufacturers, distributors and operators in the United States, the organization of the industry is much less developed in Canada , particularly in British Columbia. Industry members have made an effort to organize in B.C. but have been notably less successful. This is partly a product of natural conflicts of interest between the levels of the industry. The manufacturer's primary goal is the production and sale of as many new machines as possible. Distributors want to sell all the machines they have purchased as unplaced machines earn nothing and location owners want to have those machines which are the most popular, receive the most play and are therefore most profitable.

The focus on "hit" machines creates tensions in the industry, primarily because although games like "Pac Man" are alleged to produce up to $200,000,000/year during their period of popularity, they significantly reduce the sales and placement potential of the machines already purchased by distributors/operators and reduce the profitability of games already place in locations.

In addition to this "natural" tension, rapid growth, motivated by the claims of vast profits for all industry levels, has brought in at the operator or location levels large numbers of new members who had no previous connection with the industry. The editor of Canadian Coin Box, the only established industry magazine in Canada, has suggested that these wildly inflated income figures have drawn many inexperienced, short-time operator/managers into the industry -- and that their "shoddy" operations have been primarily responsible for the current high level of negative community concern. This operator pressure to "place" all available machines may have the effect of promoting "borderline" locations which have little likelihood of success.

The combination of lack of organization with wide and varied placement of the machines creates conditions for vastly different local management and supervision styles with few mechanisms to control individual locations which prove to be problematic in particular communties. Nevertheless, there is a common interest, throughout the industry, in avoiding the establishment of such problematic outlets. (See CVG Industry Response in Section 5.5E).

The "typical" pattern of industry organization described above has a number of variations which allow for more centralized location control. In some cases "operators" are also location owner/managers. This "vertical integration" is apparently a growing trend, particularly in the U.S., where some manufacturers are organizing to work all four levels simultaneously through franchised "family entertainment centre" packages. One major distributor in B.C. also "operates" hundreds of machines, some of which are in locations managed by the distributor.

Actual numbers of machines in place, figures on player volume and per machine take in B.C. are difficult to establish, as they apparently have never been collected by the industry. Research which will be described later in this report indicates that:

1. Almost every city, town and district in British Columbia has at least one video arcade or recreational location in which a number of video games are placed. Some communities have as many as fifteen locations, not including locations of two or fewer machines, of which there are hundreds. One major operator in B.C. has over one thousand machines in locations. One distributor sells equipment to 125 operators.

2. The typical operator/location "drop" share ranges from 60-40 to 50-50 although there are indications that this will move to 65-35 in the near future. Exceptions to this pattern are indicators of differing degrees of leverage between operators and locations. For example, B.C. Ferries, with their ideal large volume and rapid turnover locations, have

managed to obtain a 76 per cent share of "drop" from their operator. Smaller, less advantaged locations must settle for a 35 per cent share and some of these are going out of business.

3. Some locations, such as B.C. Ferries, report a "drop" of up to \$500/machine/week (grossing approximately \$1,000,000/year on an average of sixty machines). Some 7-11 stores with only two machines apparently gross similar per machine amounts/week at fifty cents per play. In other locations, "hit" machines may gross up to \$300/machine/week. The more typical take is just over \$100.00/week, though "fillers" (less popular old machines) bring in less than \$50/week.

4. Income and profitability in the industry is very difficult to establish. This is greatly impacted by general economic conditions, locations and machine popularity and costs. Several local operators claim only a fiteen per cent profit margin. Widely circulated figures such as the claim of a \$5,000,000,000 "drop" in the U.S. during 1982 are very deceptive. Bernstein Associates estimates that in 1982 the average non-mall machine lost \$6.16 and the average mall machine lost \$85.00. This estimate claims that the average "drop" was \$126.00/machine/week as opposed to the \$500-\$1000/week that is often reported in the media. Even if \$5,000,000,000 is an accurate estimate, when it is divided by 1,250,000 machines in place, a \$100/machine/week average is the outcome. The Yankee Group, a research service, describes a pattern of \$102/1980, \$140/1981, \$109/1982 and \$93/1983 (projected) as the average earnings per week for a U.S. arcade video game.

Canadian Coin Box and some current U.S. sources suggest that average machine "drop" has been reduced by 30 to 50 per cent in the last year. Most of the communities visited for this study had arcades which failed and some which were probably likely to.

This pattern of decline is evident in other Bernstein estimates of a reduction of 2,500 arcades from the current 10,000 over the next four years. The viable economic production period for machines is on the decline, while break-even periods (the time necessary to recover purchase and operations costs for a machine) is lengthening.

While U.S. averages are not necessarily directly applicable to Canada, informed members of the industry suggest that the Canadian pattern tends to follow that of the U.S. after about a six month lag. Canada also suffers from "dumping" of less popular machines and a general oversaturation of the market, which is increased by the proiferation of cheap, illegal, copyright violating "copy" machines. In 1981, a major B.C. distributor was found to be circulating a large number of such machines.

5. There are no accurate figures of player volume, but individual arcades which have registered parent permission slips for those 14-16 or under have between 500 and 1,500 registrations for just that age group. Hundreds of thousands of regular players in B.C. is certainly a possibility.

These findings suggest that:

1. The B.C. CVG industry experienced rapid and extensive growth which may have peaked in 1981.

2. There are hundreds of locations and thousands of machines in place in B.C.

3. Popular notions of income and profitability probably suffer from some exaggeration.

4. Many arcades fail, because of a combination of poor location, community economic conditions or inexperienced management. Industry conditions are conducive to the generation of widely differing types of outlets and management patterns.

5. There will probably be a general decline in number of machines/outlets in place over the next several years because of present oversaturation, a tendency to play only the most popular games, player satiation and the rapid increase in availability of high quality, low priced home units. (Some industry managers suggest that home games enhance the popularity and acceptability of arcade versions but others think that home versions will continue to cut into arcade play).

4. RESEARCH METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Given the obviously controversial nature of this study's subject matter, it was assumed that there would be many conflicting claims about the impact of CVGO's on the young. It was therefore necessary to establish some means of discriminating between information which is accurate and that which may not be. Many of the reports in the early stages of the investigation suffered from a number of apparent flaws (see previous section).

All of the information collected for the purposes of this study has therefore been evaluated with the following kinds of questions in mind:

1. How was the information gathered?
2. Is the problem cited an isolated case or is there some indication that it is typical?
3. What is the frequency of the problem?
4. What proportion of players appear to display the problem?
5. Does the information source have any vested interest in conveying a particular point of view?

These questions all relate to possible biases, either on the part of the respondents or in the methods used to gather the information. This is not meant to imply that respondents are intentionally being misleading, but merely that their position in the situation or their interests could lead them to have a "selective" perception or understanding of the issues at hand. With regard to possible methodological biases, the researcher must be concerned with the sampling and information gathering procedures used to produce the material supplied by information sources. The wider and more random the sample, the more confidence one may have in concluding that the information represents the general case. Collection procedures, whether observation, interview or other means, can be judged as reliable and valid, or not, depending on how systematically and consistently they were applied.

These considerations are relevant to the evaluation both of information reported by others and of information generated directly through this investigator's efforts. While the study makes an effort to improve upon the information produced by the single case or by obviously biased sampling procedures which are apparent in most media reports and hearsay commentary, and to use information gathering procedures which are explicitly and systematically applied, a number of conditions have limited the degree to which this is possible. Time and resource limitations for the investigator are foremost among these limitations.

The lack of prior research, the absence of systematically gathered background information, the wide range of information sources and types which proved to be of interest in this investigation, the difficulty in identifying and locating relevant sources -- all combine to require an approach which is akin more to exploration than experiment or confirmation. While the fundamental issues of youth arcade spending, income sources and delinquent acitivity were identified prior to the inititiation of the study, many others emerged over its course and were then pursued when they arose. This had the consequence of necessitating new questions, samples, sources and techniques listed in Appendix A and represent outcomes of the study as much as original intentions, as many were determined over the course of the work.

Although, these procedures are not "scientific" in that random sampling and pre-tested instruments were not used, the range of techniques, sample types and sizes and information sources are substantial. These procedures do allow for valid generalizations about CVGO conditions in the Province because over 50 communities were surveyed by phone and more than ten visited, several hundred interviews were conducted with many types of interested parties, and approximately one hundred hours of direct observation was conducted in CVGO's of all types. These activities and the multiple techniques employed also allowed for the "cross-checking" of opinions, previous "findings" and researcher-observed behaviours.

4.2 INVESTIGATIVE APPROACH

The wide range of techniques and samples employed herein are a result of the type of information collected, field conditions, a desire for multiple measures for similar information, and, of course, resource limitations.

As previously stated, the investigation was a combinaton of information gathering, issue formulation and exploration. There was an interest in finding out how different elements in the communities perceived CVGO's, what kinds of situations they took to the problematic, what evidence there was of the general incidence of the problem and what actions the communities were taking in response to CVGO's. The study is therefore complicated by the many types and forms of information which were gathered, i.e. opinions, self-reports, media treatment, alleged evidence, by-law and legal activity, direct observations, and so on.

Every effort was made to contact as wide a range of information sources and types as was feasible for a single investigator, within the available time and resource limitations. The study has attempted to find and accurately report the opinions expressed by relevant interest groups, as well as the "evidence" cited, and to evaluate how it was generated and how it compares with other applicable evidence, including that which was produced in the course of this research.

4.3 SAMPLE TYPES AND SIZES

Samples were selected on the basis of the types of information required, the availability of sources, the time available for contact and an interest in being able to make generalizations about members of the groups studied.

Since there was a desire to come to some conclusions about conditions in the Province as a whole it was necessary to contact a number of communities of different types and sizes. A general phone survey was therefore conducted for all B.C. cities and towns (No's 32/9), as well as seven districts, one regional district and one village. (See Appendix B for details). As there was a desire to do more intensive investigation in some, matters such as geographic location, community size, community type and economic conditions were take into account. An effort was made to cover both Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island Communities, as well as one Northern community. Therefore, visits were made to North Vancouver, Surrey, New Westminster, Vancouver, Burnaby, Victoria, Saanich, Sidney, the

Western Communities and Prince George.

Given the interest in community perceptions and responses to CVGO's, particularly in terms of criminal activity and by-law regulations, city clerks, licensing inspectors and police officials were contacted in most of the 50 communities. In the case of the ten more intensively studied communities, personal interviews were carried out with municipal and police officials.

The interest in spending habits required interviews with young players and those who would be expected to be most familiar with those habits, namely parents. Therefore, formal and informal interviews were conducted with some 100 young players. An effort was made to select some players from each of the ten communities visited and to have those samples reflect the age and sexual distribution among those present.

Some 70 parents were interviewed or returned questionnaires. An effort was made to contact parents who might be expected to have different reactions to CVGO's; therefore, parents accompanying players, parents attending school Parent Consultative Committee* meetings, parents in single parent groups, members of foster parent groups and a "Tough Love"** group were contacted. While most of these were located in the Lower Mainland, there was some response from parents in other communities.

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*P.C.C.'s are the present day version of Parent-Teacher Associations

**Tough Love groups are self-help groups of parents of "problem" children, such as delinquents, run-aways etc.

As there was some apparent concern on the part of schools, six Lower Mainland School Board officials and staff from some twenty Lower Mainland schools were contacted by phone or personally interviewed.

As many major complaints about CVGO's came from merchants, about 50 merchants, residents or mall operators located near CVGO's were contacted.

Because of the need to check out complaints and actual conditions in CVGO's, as well as to describe their environments, players and management activities, some 50 CVGO's in the visited communities were observed. These included major arcades, as well as locations in bowling alleys, fast food stores, corner stores and so on. Discussions were held with managers or workers in most of these locations, with a few exceptions (Victoria, Saanich, Surrey). Almost all of the arcades in each of the ten communities visited were observed at least once and a number were seen many times.

Some 15 private and government social agency workers (social workers, counsellors, psychologists, lawyers, physicians) were contacted in an attempt to discover whether CVGO's produced problems for children or their families which led to contact with such workers.

The investigator also attended a number of parent group, social service agency, school and municipal council meetings, to gather information on perceptions and responses to CVGO's.

In addition, numerous academic, government and CVGO industry contacts were made to acquire background information on CVGO's in general, and on those in B.C. in particular (See Chapter 2). In the case of media material review, articles sampled included all those published by the Vancouver Sun over the past five years, as well as collections supplied by local police and "Atari" public relations. (See Appendix A-1 for details).

As is apparent, sampling quality varies from category to category. Where sampling is more complete, as in the case of communities, we may have more confidence in generalizations drawn from the data. The same is the case with regard to general arcade types and conditions. In the case of parents, some caution is required in relation to claims about the general frequency of opinions; however, the range of responses is probably a reasonable reflection of current opinions.

Demands for brevity preclude discussion or evaluation of all of the issues involved in each sampling or technique choice, but it should be noted that the range and variety of these samples and the following techniques are far superior to those employed in any other research on this subject to date.

4.4. CHOICE OF TECHNIQUES

In addition to the use of available literature and content analysis of media materials, this study utilizes structured and unstructured interviews (in person and by phone), questionnaires, and participant and non-participant observation.

Direct observation was utilized in order to compare actual behaviour with reports about it (spending, arcade activity and supervision, near-arcade activities). Roughly 100 hours were spent in this type of work, on all days of the week and at various times of day and night. Some observations of CVGO's, players and managers, were always made prior to the investigator identifying himself. As his physical appearance was not a conspicuous marker of an "outside" observer, the impact of an "observer effect" may be taken to be minimal. This conclusion is supported by the fact that few changes in the behaviours of players or managers were seen to occur following this identification. The researcher typically played a few games, observed casually, occasionally chatting informally with participants and wandered around the outlet and the local area. Because a prime concern was spending patterns, time was spent observing amounts exchanged at the change booths and amounts deposited in the machines by players of various ages. Then, more formal contact was made with players, managers and nearby merchants.

Field conditions often made the completion of interviews difficult as noise, rapid player turnover and the rather intense involvement in the games proved a hinderance. However, in less busy situations it was sometimes possible to attract a group of players for short discussion about their involvement at the outlet.

Contacts with municipal and police officals utilized both structured and unstructured questions. Structured questions were used to generate data on issues already determined to be significant (By-law activity, CVGO complaints) and unstructured to explore general perceptions of this issue. More elaborate discussions were possible in the visited communities, allowing more detailed pursuit of questions on evidence of CVGO problems.

Brief contacts with parents at outlets generally called for simple data gathering (amounts spent, and sources and amounts available for spending) but attendance at parents' meetings allowed for more open ended discussion. A questionnaire was circulated through the B.C. Foster Parents Association to 90 groups in the Province but returned by only four individuals. This kind of low response rate, and the inability to further explore "interesting" answers was a major reason for use of the direct personal or phone contacts employed throughout this project. The researcher was able to meet briefly with a number of representatives of these groups for some more general discussion of parents' perceptions and community responses in 15 communities outside the Lower Mainland.

Attending meetings to gather information, where it was necessary for the researcher to identify himself, often made information gathering difficult because the participants tended to try to turn the investigator into a respondent. They questioned the researcher on precisely the same topics on which he was there to question them, asking for confirmation or denial of such problems as the association of CVGO's with drugs, rowdiness, increased crime etc. It is important to note that these participants demonstrated a low level of information or evidence concerning these topics and therefore cast some serious doubts on their usefulness as informants, except insofar as they were able to confirm that these issues constituted public concerns.

In all cases of respondent contact, the investigator attempted to avoid generating a perception of CVGO's as being problems; however, the mere fact of the study and its sponsorship must be assumed to have some impact in that direction. Sometimes, in the case of police and municipal officials, the initial response was that CVGO's did not constitute a problem: however, after some discussion or respondent contact with other officials, evidence of CVGO problems was recalled. This pattern, and the general issue of "instrument effect" should be taken into account in regard to how the study itself might increase the respondents' perception of CVGO's as problematic, in much the same way that media attention to CVGO's operates for the general public. While an effort to avoid this biasing effect was made, the posibility of this influence cannot be ignored.

Appendix A-2 contains samples of the kinds of questions presented to various types of respondents. As previously indicated, it was often not possible to complete all elements in each list. Many respondents, particularly CVGO managers, players and parents became less forthcoming when the investigator began writing down their answers and most did not want to make themselves available for the lengthy contact this would require.

In all cases of respondent contact, the researcher made an effort to obtain what was considered to be crucial information: from players this included how much do you spent at CVGO's?; where do you get it?; has playing produced any problems for you?; from parents this included how much does your child spend at CVGO's?; how do they get spending money?; how much?; does their CVGO participation produce any problems?; from police or municipal officals this included how many CVGO's in your community?; are they a problem?; what kind?; how has the community responded?; what by laws, if any, have been used?; from schools and social workers this included are CVGO's a problem?; what kind?; how frequently do they cause problems?

In some cases, it has been possible to present and analyze responses systematically. In others, limiting field conditions or emerging issues such as "youth congregation" prompted increased emphasis on some questions to the exclusion of others. When initial replies were "no problems with arcades" follow-up questions were not pursued. In general, the questions were designed for exploratory rather than confirmatory analysis and they were not intended to be subject to any rigorous statistical analysis. The spending and income figures, in particular, tended to be very rough approximations and must be treated as such.

4.5 CONCLUSIONS

In sum, in spite of some weaknesses in terms of rigorous technique or complete sampling, the range and variety of communities surveyed, interest groups sampled, information sources and research techniques (especially the intensive direct observational work) lend a considerable amount of credibility to the research reported here. The work appears particularly strong when compared to the somewhat limited investigative efforts on which opinions and claims are currently based.

5. FINDINGS

This chapter includes the study's findings on: CVGO types - physical environments and social atmosphere; player types and behaviours; player spending and income acquisition; and, an examination of other possible criminogenic links between young people and CVGO's, with a focus on "youth congregation" as a source of problems. In the cases where relevant information is available, the individual sections will be organized as follows: material on public perceptions of the issue under discussion (including parents, police, schools, personnel, municipal officials etc.); the study's interview or observation results; results of other related studies; and discussion and conclusions.

It should be noted, at the outset, that there is great variation in CVGO forms, locations, apparent social functions, player behaviours, management styles, and so on. Nevertheless, an effort will be made to describe some typical patterns and to give some indication of how frequently they occur within the selected samples.

5.1 INTEREST GROUPS' PERCEPTIONS OF CVGO's

A. INTERVIEWS

The following descriptions are derived from the telephone interviews with municipal officers and police in 56 communities as well as personal interviews with police, merchants, parents, CVGO managers and young players.

1. Municipal clerks and police

About half the clerks reported no serious complaints about CVGO's in their community. Where there was a pattern of complaints, it was usually from merchants or businessmen in the vicinity of a CVGO. They complained primarily about littering, too many bikes on the sidewalk, noise and vandalism, all associated with large numbers of young males "hanging out". These complaints tended to rest on a few incidents, often during summer months when outside congregation was naturally greatest. The concern was clearly in relation to the negative impact that groups of youngsters were thought to have on business.

Clerks recorded few complaints from parents. Where they were present, they generally involved concern about too much money being spent, possible drug access and some anxiety about the "kinds of kids" at CVGO's who might influence their own.

Clerks had recorded complaints from residents in only four communities; these involved concern about noise, littering, rowdyism and vandalism.

Clerks and police voiced concern about littering, noise, vandalism, drug use or sale, and CVGO related thefts in 14 communities. It was typical for such concerns to be related to only one or two locations. There was usually some discrimination between "good" and "bad" outlets. The major aspects which were usually mentioned as determinants of outlet quality were location, type of arcade, and, most, significantly management. Some concern was expressed about the use of young managers, usually involving a belief that they would be too friendly with those close to their age and lack the authority to control young people.

Enclosed mall locations were felt to be least troublesome, as they took advantage of mall security, limited hours and high public visibility. More isolated outlets with later hours produced most difficulties for police. Police and some other adults expressed preference for brighter lights in the arcades, all sections of the arcade visible from the outside, no loud music, and so on.

While almost every clerk or police respondent claimed that good management was critical for problem reduction, they were aware that most complaints concerned problems which occured outside outlets: in alleys, parking lots, and the street in front of the outlet, where managers had very limited power to influence activities. The primary perceived problem is congregation, not internal outlet activities.

These leads from the general survey were pursued through personal interviews with police, merchants, parents, players and others in ten communities.

2. Merchants, mall operators, and managers

While many merchants, mall operators and mall managers reported some initial anxiety about nearby CVGO's, their fears had generally not been realized. The most typical response was "no problems". Where some problem had been present, informal cooperation tended to be sufficient to resolve the problem, i.e. installing bike racks, increasing activity in relation to discouraging littering or loitering in front of the outlet. The investigator encountered no merchants who had serious concerns at the present time. Merchants who provided supplementary services not available in CVGO's (food, drink, cigarettes) had no complaints about "spill over" business. Managers of three B.C. liquor distribution outlets were not aware of any liquor related problems in nearby CVGO's, although one complained of some past vandalism.

Informants from various levels of mall organization (security, management and merchants) sometimes presented conflicting information, but it appears that no malls were prepared to cancel the lease of any CVGO on the basis of present concerns. Several respondents suggested that the high profit share mall management received for CVGO floor space increased their tolerance of existing problems (congregation, shoplifting) but there was no way to confirm this. No respondents could supply data indicating increases in shoplifting, violence or other problems following the introduction of CVGO's but there is a widespread assumption that youth problems in malls are likely to be located in the vicinity of the CVGO. Many recognized that malls traditionally serve as "hangouts" for youths in residentially dispersed communities and CVGO's simply serve to increase the concentration of youths in particular areas of the mall.

3. Parents

The few parents who reported concerns about their children's involvement in CVGO's voiced some worry about the "addictive" quality of the games and amounts of money spent; however, reports of concern about theft were very rare. Parents usually responded that they had no serious concern about CVGO's, however, discussion often revealed a vague suspicion about their negative potential. When open discussion about CVGO's occured, it was the researcher's perception that a tendency existed for a kind of "negative infection" among participants, which seemed to emphasize and support negative perceptions of arcades.

The concern expressed was least apparent among those accompanying their children to outlets, somewhat greater among parents contacted through school affiliated groups and greatest among those in foster parent, single parent or "Tough Love" groups which tend to be oriented to "problems with kids".

Parents or guardians of problem children, as well as police, social workers and others who work with such children, tended to be highly suspicious of arcades. They seemed to anticipate that such children's problems would be particularly evident at arcades and felt that this anticipation was borne out by their experience. They referred to arcades as places where runaways find places to stay, drug contacts made and "parties" located. However, other social workers, police and Big Brothers who made use of arcades for contact and work with such children, thereby actually spending considerable time in CVGO's, tended to hold much less negative opinions.

A striking number of parents and some police seemed to assume that the Granville Strip arcades were typical of most arcades, and that the sexual or drug devices and services available there represented general arcade conditions. This association between "video" and sex surfaced a number of times in phone or personal interviews with city clerks, police and parents, media attention to "Red Hot Video" probably being one of the sources of this impression. Similar media coverage of the "General Custer" video game cassette whose importation was blocked by Customs, may also have contributed to this connection. (It should be noted that this game, in which the "successful" player's pawn has sex with a bound Indian maiden, was not an arcade game but a home game). Those with little direct CVGO experience seem most susceptible to having their impressions influenced by any alleged CVGO-problem connections.

4. Residents

Only a few residents were contacted for the purposes of this study and most of these seemed unaware of the presence of the outlet or any problem emmanating from it.

5. Schools personnel

School Board representatives from Surrey, Richmond, Burnaby, Vancouver and North Vancouver revealed that CVGO's had never been discussed by their respective boards. However, further inquiries produced some apparently isolated reports of stealing from school, truancy and absenteeism thought to be related to CVGO's. Contacts with some 30 school administrators, teachers and counsellors, mostly in the Lower Mainland, also revealed mostly incidental concerns over a few instances of such problems. These contacts also suggested a rather low level of parent concern about CVGO's, as they had rarely, if ever, been raised as an issue at parent consultative committee meetings.

6. Youths

Approximately 100 youths contacted for the study reported the main problems resulting from their activities to be: overcoming the resistance of parents regarding the amount of time and money spent at arcades; being pressured to "move along" by mall security or outlet managers when they were no longer playing; and being questioned or dispersed by police when "hanging around" outside CVGO's. None reported any school problems related to CVGO participation although a few mentioned teacher's negative attitudes towards video outlets. In discussions, youths who were willing to talk at some length voiced resentment towards community opposition to arcades, arguing that there "isn't much else to do around here", playing the games is harmless and very enjoyable, and it provides a place to meet up with friends and find out what's going on that night or for the weekend. Basically, these young people see arcades as a place to get together that is in some sense "theirs".

In rejecting the notion that arcades cause problems for children, young people themselves often assert just the opposite, namely, that arcades keep them out of trouble: "better to be here than on the streets"; "money that used to be spent on drugs is spent in here"; "I got a job so I could play more" are typical comments. They are not oblivious to possible problems with arcades, including drugs, tough kids etc. but they assert that they must face such problems in other places as well. They often describe the places in town where drugs can be found, including schools and restaurants. In communities where there are several CVGO's young people discriminate among them in terms of their own interests, attending the outlet where they feel safe and comfortable.

Many express some concerns about how much they spend but they feel it is worth it. They love the excitement, challenge, competion and sense of accomplishment they experience in playing at arcades with their friends. They recognize the powerful attraction of the games but accept that it is up to them to manage their spending.

B. OTHER STUDIES

The POCOMO study of 323 students in the Coquitlam-Port Coquitlam area confirmed the findings of the present study in relation to the motivations and perceptions of the players. Youths are attracted by the excitement and challenge of the games themselves, the social opportunities and environment of music and lights, and the sense of having a place where they are not "hassled" by people in authority. The POCOMO study also found that the majority of students questioned found the games "addictive" but did not cite any problems that this caused other than wanting to play as much as possible.

A study by B. David Brooks which reports on CVGO players in California (N=973, ages 10 - 18) had similar findings. Under 5% felt that drugs, stealing, truancy and the like were problems associated with CVGO's. About 10% had concerns about excessive spending or using lunch money to play.

The POCOMO study also surveyed 33 homes near an arcade in an effot to investigate widespread allegations of the general tendency for B&E's and vandalism to increase near CVGO's. The study found:

1. Only two-thirds of the residents were aware of the presence of the arcade.
2. The majority expressed negative opinions of arcades ("bad hangouts", "full of dishonest people").
3. Almost all of those surveyed had never been in an arcade.

C. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

These measures of community/interest group perceptions of CVGO's suggest a wide variation in attitutdes towards CVGO's across communities and relevant interest groups. While a majority of communities surveyed perceive no serious problems with them, a significant minority do. The problem to which the majority of concerned communities are most sensitive is the congregation of large numbers of young people.

Adults - parents, residents and merchants - exhibit a tendency towards negative opinions of arcades. This is particularly true of those few who have direct negative experience with them or those who have little direct experience and rely on the media for information on CVGO's. Police opinion varies both in terms of perceived incidence of problems in their respetive communities and in their general "tolerance" of youth congregation. Some police, particularly those in smaller communities, seem to feel that difficulties associated with arcades are simply an expression of the "natural" problems that communities must expect with adolescents. These officers seem to prefer informal management of the difficulties which arise, some even arguing that the concentration of youths at outlets makes their job easier, simplifying contact with and access to kids who are problems. They are often of the opinion that bylaws are likely to do no more than relocate the same old youth problems.

Most municipal administrators and police feel that "good management" is the most effective means of preventing problems with CVGO's, at the same time acknowledging that most of the problem behaviour occurs "outside" the arcades. The fact that clerks report that any problems occur around or outside rather than within outlets may be because: a) problems are more visible there and b) there is no "responsible" supervision other than that provided by police or the general public.

Available responses from young players themselves reveal their strong positive attraction to CVGO's, the enjoyment and satisfaction derived from them and a general rejection of negative allegations about CVGO's or the need to regulate them. They also seem aware that "kids who get into trouble" will get into trouble at arcades as well.

Suggestions from police and others that lights and visibility be increased and noise reduced would reduce the very effects that young players find attractive. Two patterns are present in the responses of the groups interviewed for this study. First, much of the most negative opinion about CVGO's came from people who had never actually visited the "problematic" location, but were instead relying on second hand reports or impressions gleaned from the media. Such a lack of first hand experience gives rise to stereotypes of arcades which are often far more negative than reality would appear to warrant.

The second response pattern involves a difference between those who must deal with youngsters who have family or legal problems and those who do not. Parents, guardians, police, social workers and others who work with such children tend to have more fears and concerns about the effects of CVGO's than do those who have contact only with "non-problem" youngsters. However, other helping professionals who utilize arcades in working with their young clients tend to hold much less negative opinions.

5.2 OBSERVATIONS OF CVGO'S IN B.C.

While the material on perceptions of CVGO"S in B.C. suggests that the level of concern among some sectors of the population (parents, teachers and youths) is relatively low, and that actual confirmed incident reports are generally rare, police, merchants, social workers and others in about half the communities surveyed did express some concerns. Direct field observations at some 50 CVGO's were undertaken to ascertain the prevalence of conditions which these concerned sectors suspect or assert, whether these concerned the "dark, smoky, loud environement", violence, harassment of players or other citizens, drug transaction or other illegal or disturbing activities.

A. TYPES OF OUTLETS

CVGO's are found in a wide variety of locations in B.C. Major outlets are always found in commercial zones, generally in malls or on business strips. The extent to which they abut residential areas is determined by local zoning patterns but for the most part they are not found within primarily residential areas. Minor outlets, such as two to four machine locations in corner stores, are often more likely to be found embedded in otherwise exclusively residential sections.

There are three basic types of CVGO's: mall and "free standing street" locations containing 25 to 50 video machines, with a few pin ball games, devoted entirely to game play; large mixed recreational settings, containing some combination of pins, foozeball, pool tables, skating or bowling; other "secondary use" locations, where two to four machines are added to an ongoing business such as a fast food outlet, corner store or restaurant.

B PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS

The physical environments of the CVGO's are clearly affected by the quality of contiguous business locations or the locations in which CVGO's are founded as "secondary uses". Locations in malls tended to be quite new in appearance, often having "tiffany" or other modern lighting, wall to wall carpets, all sections visible from the change booth and open to public view from mall corridors. They ususally had signs posted prohibiting boisterous behaviour, smoking, drinking and eating. Such rules were almost always followed, enhancing and maintaining the appearance of the outlet and protecting the machines from damage. The sensual environment was dominated by the whirring, pinging, zapping and booming of machine sound effects.

Free standing street locations offered a more varied picture. Some rivalled new mall locations in pleasantness of appearance but others were conversions of unsuccessful businesses of other types, laid out with less visible access to all sections. More of these locations are dominated by loud music which sometimes overode machine noise in less busy playing times. Most had the same stringent eating, smoking and drinking rules; however, some set aside one section where these were permissable, particularly in cases where food, drink, or cigarettes were sold within the outlet. The smoking issue was often the most problematic because prohibiting smoking inside required that players go outside, where passersby and local merchants might perceive them to be "loitering" or "hanging out". Some of these locations provided tables and chairs for patrons.

The "mixed recreaction" locations (bowling alleys, skating rinks, pool halls) tended to look more rundown and "used", though here again, there were significant variations; some were clean and well kept, others were not. Eating, drinking and smoking were more prevalent here, as these items were generally for sale on the premises.

As stated previously, the smaller "secondary use" locations may be found in most sectors of the community where restaurants, fast food shops, corner stores and the like are found. In some of these locations, 7-11 Stores for example, serious planning had gone into machine placement and player regulation. Machines and players were visible from the counter and the street. In others, machines were at the back of the store, isolated from other customers and public view. The general physical environment varies from new, bright and open to old, dark and out of view: these differences were likely to reflect the general physical appearance of the business itself and those in the immediate area.

As police and municipal clerks reported problems around or outside of outlets, the investigator spent some time wandering through or "hanging around" areas such as parking lots, alleys, or the street in front of CVGO"s. No agressive, anti-social behaviour was observed; only a few had congregations near the outlet which were generally discouraged by managers. Malls often have rules about loitering in one place in a corridor and their security men moved youngsters along.

In sum, there was great variation in physical environments of CVGO's in B.C., although the vast majority were much more open, smokeless and pleasant in appearance than those with negative opinions about them seem to believe.

Arcades dominated by loud music, machine noise and the flashing lights of display screens are the types which youngsters often appear to prefer and adults seem to find nerve-wracking. The dim lighting found in some of these outlets magnifies this effect and the responses to it

There are indications of a new trend in arcade development - the combined restaurant-arcade. The single example of this format found in B.C. is in Burnaby. It appears to be clean and well-run, though still serving a primarily juvenile crowd rather than the "family" business it aspires to. Several major U.S. chains are franchising this format ("Chucky Cheeze" and "Leisuretime") combining pizza for everyone, animated robot characters for young children, video games for older ones and video tape entertainment for adults. These outlets deny admission to adolescents on their own. Inquiries about such outlets have been made by businessmen in Richmond and Burnaby.

C. SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS

The previously described CVGO types tend to be conducive to certain kinds of social atmospheres.

The mall locations tended to be "play and leave" situations. The impression was generally of a place intended solely for playing or watching. The lack of seating facilities and of possiblities for smoking, eating and drinking discourages hanging about. Chatting or clustering was rarely observed. When it occurred it was usually brief and preceeded leaving. Players appear to come in alone or in very small groups, play and move on. There was some mix of adults and parents with children observed but young male players and a few small clusters of girls (as in almost all locations) tended to be the most numerous element.

Free standing street locations, particularly those with eating, drinking and smoking opportunities, appear to be more conducive to "hanging out" and socializing. A number of these seem to serve as "neighbourhood centres" or areas where friends gather. These locations also seem to be "sorted out" by the teen populations in particular communities, each known by young people as the place where "we" go. There are often few apparent differences between the locations but different youth groups have established their reputations as a "good" place or not.

This pattern was particularly apparent in some sections of Burnaby, Richmond, Surrey and North Vancouver, as well as in the Western Communities and Prince George. It was in this type of outlet that young people were observed spending hours together, "hanging out", moving from group to group, chatting and kidding. (Observations of adults entering such outlets led to the impression that the atmosphere of machine noise, music, teen talk and clustering made some adults appear to feel like alien, unwelcome observers.)

This apparent effect was noted, though less powerfully, in mall and other locations as well. Adults were observed to hover and hesitate before entering large CVGO's, or before settling down to play.

"Mixed" recreation centres provided evidence of different types of players and environments: pool halls tended to have mostly late teen and young adult males; bowling alleys, more adults. These "mixed" services, types of clients and physical environments had impact on the general social atmosphere which made bowling alleys and skating rinks, in particular, seem less teen dominated and secluded than free standing arcades.

Smaller "secondary" use outlets, such as retail stores, also represented a "play and leave" situation in most cases. Some youngsters attended primarily for the purpose of playing but most seemed to use the machines in conjunction with getting something to eat or running an errand, dropping what money is left into a game. Adults who played almost always seemed to represent the latter pattern: buying the available service being the primary activity, playing the secondary. When youngsters gathered at this type of location, it was usually for a brief time, prior to getting together to go somewhere else.

Any generalizations about social atmosphere and type of population served must take a number of factors into account. The busiest times for outlets varied depending on other services they provided, the time of the day or week, their location in relation to other CVGO's, local arcade regulations and so on. Youngsters could be expected to be in greatest attendance after school and on weekends. Families tended to go to mall locations in the early evening or to other locations on weekend afternoons. Young adult males could be found throughout the week. Young couples were often found later in the evening, particularly on weekends. Southeast Burnaby seems to serve many under 16's from New Westminster and Surrey whose local arcade access has been restricted by community bylaws. West Burnaby seems to be attracting many young adults and teens from Vancouver where local regulation has restricted general arcade access to those 18 and over and limited arcade development to the "unseemly" types on the Granville Strip. Some general recreation centres like bowling alleys and skating rinks often schedule events and participants by age which has an obvious impact on the types of players in attendance.

"Neighbourhood" outlets, in particular, are likely to reflect the general social conditions of the surrounding area. Locally informed operators spoke of a reluctance to provide machines to "troublesome" areas. They seemed to mean lower or working class areas which have a history of juvenile problems. Police in Surrey, Prince George, North Vancouver, Nanaimo and several others indicated that CVGO's which had proven problematic for them were located in "traditional trouble spots". One police officer mentioned that one arcade where drug and B&E contacts had been made was located in a gathering area on a teenage "cruising route" that he had travelled "20 years ago when I was a kid".

A high frequency of leather jackets, jeans and a generally "tough" appearing young clientele often has a strong effect on middle class adults leading them to conclude that it is not the kind of place they want their children to be. In communities where this kind of arcade exists, the "tough exterior" appears to be restricted to one or two outlets.

In general, there tended to be quite a broad mixture of young people in outlets of all types. No tension was apparent among individuals or groups of similar or different appearance, "style" or class. In busy periods, those who arrived together seemed to stay together, having infrequent, brief contact with others. During quiet periods, in outlets where "hanging out" was permissible, people just sat around and talked. No case of violence, harassment, theft or vandalism was ever observed by the investigator in over 100 hours of day and late night observation, on all days of the week, in any of the ten communities visited.

One area of frequent concern for police is the "heavy late dump", which they report as the case when large numbers of young males depart from an arcade at closing time. Observations conducted for this study found that the vast majority of outlets were nearly empty at closing time. Even on Friday and Saturday nights many arcades closed before their 11 p.m. to 1 a.m. posted closing times. Young players usually just drift away in small groups or individually. No large, tense, loud or carousing group was ever observed. Mall outlets were often crowded just before closing. They close at the same time, usually relatively early (6-10 p.m.) as all other mall business, and all mall patrons leave en masse. This reduces opportunity for and concern about youth group vandalism.

In sum, the arcade experience and the social atmosphere in outlets, as observed in this study, does not appear to induce anti-social aggressive behaviour of any kind. The "cluster talk" of the young tended to be about the games, their social relationships or where to go next. Some neighbourhood outlets displayed a sense of "community", with clear networks of friends and acquaintances, the manager being familiar with the individuals and groups. This stands in strong contrast to mall locations where supervising or playing machines is the "business at hand", conducted among stangers, in large volumes, who arrive, play and leave. B.C. Ferries machines display this pattern of behaviour and their representative reported that they have not had a complaint about machine play in three years.

D. SUPERVISION

Supervision is widely perceived by many police, city officals and merchants as the crucial element which determines whether or not an outlet will be problematic.

They voice concerns about unscrupulous managers taking advantage of youngsters, letting them spend amounts that are "obviously" greater than they should be expected to have access to, allowing drinking and drug use, not protecting the young from older patrons and so on.

Observations and interviews indicated that there is as much variation in supervision as there is in decor. Almost all outlets had posted rules regarding acceptable behaviour, age restrictions and so on. For the most part, these were enforced, particularly where their violation might threaten damage to machines. (It is interesting to note that several operators claim that placements of machines in "socially approved" locations, like rec centres inevitably result in significant machine damage due to lack of supervision).

Most of the Lower Mainland mall locations visited appeared to be run in a very businesslike manner, with one supervisor behind a change booth and another floor walker to make management's presence felt during busy periods. In some cases supervisors wore shirts and ties or white blouses with change aprons. However, some mall locations and free standing locations tended to be supervised by rather young adults who seemed to provide change and little else. They rarely engaged the players in any interaction beyond the exchange of money unless yelling or machine abuse attracted their attention. On the other hand, a striking number of managers seemed to have "mom" or "pop" relationship with young players; knowing them by name, favourite machine, recent high scores, recent machine spending and on much more personal terms. These "parent figures" were rarely seen without some young person nearby, anxious to chat or do an errand if called upon. This type of relationship was not restricted to older managers. Some young adult male managers displayed and expressed clearly parental concern for the young people who came in, particularly their "regulars".

Supervision in "mixed" recreation and small "secondary use" outlets evidenced much less involvement with players. This lack of involvement seemed, at least in part, to be a product of their being busy with other duties. In general, owners of these and other types of outlets tended to supervise more closely than did their employees, and tended to be willing to tolerate any youth problems involving machine play or congregation. This is probably due to their direct stake in the machines and playing profits. "Mixed" recreation environments like bowling alleys and skating rinks also tended to have a number of people on duty, allowing distribution of supervision not available in smaller outlets.

The primary means of discipline available to outlet managers consisted of the use of the threat of banning from the outlet to those who did not follow whatever the rules of the outlet might be. The greatest punishment was simply not letting a youngster in to play. Banning is consequential because it restricts both playing opportunity and the possibility of being with friends who frequent the outlet. These bans, which most managers claimed they used, varied depending on the nature and frequency of the infraction and the willingness of the manager to give in to pleading for "one more chance". Many managers could recall youngsters who were banned "for good" but in most cases, it was used for a week or two. Total bans were likely to be a result of attempted drug use or sale, theft or damage to the premises. "Being too noisy", "running around" or "bothering other patrons" tended to result in less severe sanctions. Managers reported that it was rarely necessary to resort to banning.

All managers who were asked spoke of a willingness to follow any parents request not to allow their child access to the outlet but most said they had never received such a request. Managers often spoke of a desire for parent contact in the case of any problem regarding a child's playing at the outlet, many preferring a discussion with a parent to receiving the complaint indirectly from police or others. (The reluctance of social service workers, schools and parents to initiate such contact was often noted by the investigator).

Observations indicated that it was rarely necessary for a manager to intervene in player activity. There were a few cases of 10 or 11 year olds chasing each other, and a few harsh words or blows directed to low scoring machines by late teen males and some forbidden smoking. This was the extent of observed behaviour requiring intrusive supervision. Some neighbourhood arcades have "informal" supervisors among young players who report any problems or machine abuse to managers with whom they have become friendly.

A few cases were observed of young female managers who appeared to have the potential of being too friendly with those players close to their age or lacking the authority to control young players. One of these young women was on duty at the single case of a "stoned" appearing crowd in an outlet. However, in almost all other cases of young management, the young men seemed to have the situation well in hand. Some had friends who dropped by but this caused no apparent problems and in a few cases, they helped out with things which had to be done in the outlet.

Although police voiced concern about managers being drug or stolen property contacts, only one illegal transaction or talk about one was observed by the investigator. This involved a middle-aged female manager buying a "hot" carton of toilet paper from a male adult (who did not use the ten dollars to play games). Only two managers made contacts with young patrons that appeared at all suspicious. Managers were not observed passing property or drugs, nor leaving the booth to go somewhere with a young player.

There were only a very few cases in which young players were present in violation of local bylaw regulations. Managers appear to be quite sensitive to this issue at this time and asserted that allowing under age players in during restricted hours was simply not worth the risk to their license or business.

In sum, supervision at the vast majority of outlets seemed to be adequate. The generally non-intrusive quality of the supervision appeared to be valued by many young players and they seemed to respond by not causing trouble. They complained of rigid, "move along" supervision from police and some managers. This latter style of youth control may actually be the source of some of the confrontations or youth problems reported by police and merchants.

E. SUMMARY & DISCUSSION

Direct observations of CVGO's in B.C. suggest the following:

1. There is great variety of CVGO types in B.C., ranging from large mall locations, to large and medium sized business strip or neighbourhood locations, to the outlet where two, three or four machines have been added to a variety of small businesses.

2. There was correlation among outlet type, typical players and activity patterns: mall outlets had the widest variety of players and the least amount of socializing: free standing street locations were more likely to display "neighbourhood" group characteristics and provide opportunities for socializing and congregation. There was generally a mix of types of players at smaller outlets; young local males were likely to be the predominant type and except for those with seating or eating facilities, congregation was very limited.

3. Physical and social environments of CVGO's varied from outlets in new and attractive mall locations to those in less physically attractive street locations. Physical environments of CVGO's tended to reflect other local conditions and therefore varied considerably; however, generally they were more attractive, smoke-free and clean than might be expected for youth congregation points. The social environments tended to be relaxed and free of conflict.

4. Anti-social activities within or around the observed outlets was rare. While there were variations in the quality of supervision provided at CVGO's, the necessity for intrusive intervention was quite low. A desire to protect the equipment and minimize local complaints led managers to attend closely to machine play and discourage littering or loitering in front of the outlets.

5.3 PLAYER TYPES AND ACTIVITIES

One recurring concern which is voiced about CVGO's by police, clerks, adults, schools and social workers is "the kinds of kids that hang around there". Informal reports from police sometimes include a notation of the presence of "known" young offenders. Social workers report that their "difficult kids" can often be located at a certain arcade. Parents of "difficult kids" also report that their children spend "a lot of time" at particular arcades (about twice the frequency reported by other parents). These reports suggest that a high proportion of troublesome youngsters do frequent arcades with some reqularity.

Other media and police reports charcterize players as video "addicts" or "junkies", claiming that the individual's connection to the games is "out of control", compulsive and therefore capable of motivating anti-social or theft activity. This motivation and the presence at CVGO's of some youth experienced in activities such as theft, B&E's or drug use, lead to the assumption that these activities will be encouraged and facilitated.

Video manufacturers, distributors and some operator-distributors are clearly concerned about the image of CVGO's as "hangouts for young toughs". They would like to see major CVGO's perceived as "family entertainment" centres and frequently report a "high proportion of family business". This orientation is apparent in the development of the new franchises described in 4.1B2 and in the comments of local industry representatives who strongly object to the assertion that the "sleazy operations" frequented almost entirely by adult males on the Granville Strip are typical of CVGO's as a whole.

Given those claims and concerns, the investigation attempted to draw some conclusions on "typical" players and "typical" player behaviours. These conclusions are based on a review of the few systematic studies of players and on direct observations conducted for the study itself. Some of the material is presented in other sections of Chapter 4.

A. PLAYER TYPES

1. Direct Observations and Interviews

During 100 hours of observations, the young players observed seemed to represent a wide cross-section of the youth community. They ranged from those who were neat and well dressed to those of considerably more "shoddy" appearance. Those asked reported parents' occupations ranging from surgeon, lawyer and teacher to unemployed service worker. Some expressed positive feelings for school and academic pursuits and others expressed negative feelings; however, none reported CVGO-related school difficulties. Some were husky, athletic extroverts and others rather awkward looking introverts. In effect, it appeared that just about any type of young person that can be found in any B.C. community can be seen in CVGO's of some kind.

However, as has already been described in the discussion of CVGO environments, types of players were not evenly distributed across CVGO types. Communities visited often displayed a pattern where one or two outlets seemed to be the gathering point for young people with "bad" reputations and youngsters chose to go there or to other outlets, depending on their own preferences. In general, the players seemed to reflect the local social environment, whether it be middle class suburbs or working class neighbourhood. This general pattern varied with time of observation. Immediately after school and on weekend afternoons, the youngest and most "innocent" appearing players dominated. Later in the evenings, older teens and young adults, and those of rougher appearance were present in higher proportions. At the vast majority of outlets, the distribution of young player types appeared quite wide, but the most prevalent group was always males aged 10-20. Girls accounted for about 10-15% of players present, tending to be in the 13-18 age group.

Casual observations of other recreational locations that young people frequent (movies, concerts, bowling alleys and skating rinks) suggested that young people of similarly wide appearances may be found there as well. Pool halls, where an age limit of 16 is applicable, tended to display a rougher appearing clientele.

No comparable study has been done on young non-players but there is no apparent reason to believe that those who attend CVGO's differ in significant social characteristics from those who do not, although the proportion of youngsters with problems may be higher at selected arcades.

About one-third of the young players interviewed reported having home video games.

2. Other studies

Atari released a study in 1983 which read as follows: "He's a well adjusted teenager who is active socially, enjoys sports and maintains a grade average of "B" or above. He's also the average video game player." This phone survey of 2,000 people aged 10 - 45 found that players were more likely to be involved in group activities and team sports while non-players were interested in individual activities such as reading and sewing. Much of this finding was simply a result of the comparison of typical young male patterns with the sample of females who tend to be non-players. The finding that 76% of players report an overall grade average of "B" or above does not appear to be an artifact of the typical sex or player bias.

As it was not possible to acquire more detailed information on the study, which might reveal structural biases in sampling or questions, and as the "news relase" is obviously presented to convey the most positive picture of the "typical" player, its results must be viewed with some caution.

The Brooks study reports that 60% of players interviewed lived with both parents; 85% had an employed parent; 40% reported participation in school related non-academic activites and over 60% reported part-time jobs. These results, from 973 male and female players, aged 10-18, suggests that "typical" players probably have an average range of teenage social activity and school accomplishment, though somewhat less active and accomplished than the Atari study would indicate. 42% reported having home video games.

The POCOMO study of 323 young people aged 10 - 19 found that 63.2% go to arcades. There was a general pattern of playing decreasing with age: 75% of 10 - 12 year old males and 61% of senior secondary males reported playing at CVGO's. This decrease with age was more significant for females, who always report a lower frequency of attendance than males. There was no other information differentiating players from non-players. 36% reported having home video games.

B. PLAYER ACTIVITIES

1. Direct Observations

The basic reason for the many hours of direct observation was to compare actual outlet-affiliated behaviour with reports about it. This involved a desire to check on spending habits, and to evaluate allegations of drug use, public harassment, fights, thefts, vandalism and shoplifting associated with commercial video game playing.

Players tended to come to arcades with a friend, girls often in small groups. Players, particularly young ones, could be seen rushing into outlets, with obviously high enthusiasm; older youths tended to "drift in".

"Introductions" were never observed, so it is likely that most of the affiliation that took place at CVGO's was a product of "outside" neighbourhood and school contacts. There appeared to be little in the way of cross age range social contact. Young players were never observed meeting and leaving with older teens or adults.

There appeared to be an accepted etiquette among players regarding turn taking and not disturbing each other at play. While some apparent acquaintances might teasingly distract one another, even that was rare. The primary activity in all locations was the playing itself. Players generally played only one or two "favourites", generally with quite serious concentration. When not playing, they were likely to be waiting for a turn or just watching others play. Other non-playing activity varied by outlet type and other available services (see Social environment 5.2C).

The nature of involvement in actual play also varied. The level of concentration was generally quite intense but less apparently so among some experienced players. Some players talked to the machines, coaxing cooperation or complaining about "bad breaks". Some stood immobile before the machines, only fingers and eyes at play. Others wiggled and wove, hips and shoulders twisting and turning in reaction to the game's rising and fading opportunities.

Some players have cheering sections, exchanging comments, congratulations and advice. Others played quietly alone. Although both discouragement and elation were often actively expressed during play, most players seemed to leave with a degree of pleased satisfaction. There appeared to be little sense of frustration or failure accompanying those who left or motivating aggressive behaviour within or outside the outlet.

The drive to play and satisfaction derived from it was obvious, more openly displayed by the youngest players but freely admitted to by those somewhat older. Doing better "next time" and having your initials included on the "top scores display" of the machine appeared to be ongoing motivations.

During all visits, for all the communities, mornings, evenings and nights, Monday through Sundays, the investigator never saw an outlet related fight, intimidation of a young person by an older teen or adult, harassment of an adult, evidence of vandalism or theft within the outlet or in the vicinity. On Friday and Saturday nights, some players, in a few arcades, appeared to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, but these tended to be young adults (the group that arcade managers report as the major type of "difficult to control" patrons) rather than teens. Those teens who were impaired did not appear to be causing problems for other participants.

The investigator was offered marijuana outside one arcade in Prince George (while two police cars were parked only a few feet away) and one arcade in Burnaby appeared on one Saturday night to be populated with young people under the influence of drugs. However, drug or alcohol use was never observed in an outlet. Players reported that drug use interfered with their quality of play and a number mentioned that they would rather use what money they had on playing. However, parking lots outside of arcades in Prince George, Richmond and Burnaby did display a pattern of car to car visits which may have involved some drug transactions involving older teens and young adults.

Only a few cases were observed where the player's apparent youth violated local arcade attendance age restrictions. These players kept to themselves and their presence seemed to cause no problems for them or other players.

2. Other Studies

The New York City study, which found drug use or sale in two-thirds of the outlets observed, has been discussed in the "literature" section.

The only other systematic study of youth arcade behaviour is found in Brook's work. His sample reports that: about 50% spend up to one half of their time in the outlet playing and about 50% spend one half or more of their time doing so; the vast majority use non-playing time to watch other players, wait for a turn on "their" game or for "talking with friends and having a good time". Over 90% report no problems at the location with drug use or sale and 5% note such problems, once in a while. Only about 5% think there is any relationship between truancy and arcade attendance.

Brook's own observations, both concealed and open, revealed few arcade related behaviour problems.

C. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

These studies and observations seem to indicate:

1. A wide variety of young players appear to attend some type of CVGO regularly. This probably includes more than one half of youth in the 10 - 18 age range in many communities. Young males from 10 - 18 were the most frequent attenders. Girls represented a small proportion of those generally in attendance and there was a scattering of teen and young adult couples. Older single males may represent between 10% and 100% of those in attendance depending on the type of outlet and local restrictions. (The Granville Strip arcades constitute the most extreme latter case). These patterns are all influenced by local restrictions, time of the day or week and type of location.

2. While there may be a disproportionate representation of young people with family or police difficulties, they probably constitute a small proportion of patrons at most arcades, as they tend to frequent only one or two outlets from among all those in a community.

3. Actual arcade behaviour was clearly focused on game play itself and other activities, consisting mainly of waiting, watching and chatting, revolved around it.

4. There was no clear indication that illegal or anti-social activities were engaged in within or in the vicinity of the vast majority of observed outlets, though there were a few exceptions.

5. Observations of the lack of the initiation of relationships and the lack of cross-age contact suggests that "recruitment" or influence in illegal or other negative activity is probably rare.

6. Terms like "addicted" or "zombie-like" to describe players acknowledges the strong attraction of the games and a common level of intense involvement on the part of players, but their derogatory implications are not validated by the investigator's observations or reports from players.

7. Between one-third and one-half of young players seem to have some kind of Home Video Games, but all prefer to play in arcades becase of the complexity of the games there and the "atmosphere" in outlets.

5.3 YOUNG PLAYER'S CVGO SPENDING PATTERNS

A. PLAYER'S SPENDING

A major concern and source of criticism for CVGO's is the amount of money that young people spend to play in them. A general assumption is that these amounts are excessive, beyond the normal resources for youths and therefore a significant force in motivating theft from home or elsewhere or use of other illegitimate means to acquire these funds. This general impression receives some support from media reports on the enormous business income generated by machine play and individual youngsters who spend large amounts playing video games, ("Boy's $10-a-day Video Game Habit Case For Controls", Toronto Star, April 12, 1982). It is reinforced by public observation of large numbers of young people in CVGO's.

Establishing accurate figures of such spending patterns is difficult because available evidence is either based on a few extreme cases where problems have been evident but whose generality has not been established, or on self-reports from players, who may not know how much they spend or be unwilling to reveal the true amounts. This study has attempted to make use of a variety of sources to discover if there is any consistent pattern to be found among them, including examination of media reports and other studies; interviews with players, parents and various other concerned groups, and direct observations of per session spending.

1. Interviews

a) Players: Most of the 100 players interviewed reported that they spent between $2 and $10 per week. Younger players (12 and under) generally fall in the $.50 to $5 range and most 13 - 16 year olds between $5 and $10 though some exceeded that amount ($15-$20). Girls (N-20) typically spend less than half of what boys do across age ranges and those under 13 are noticeably absent at CVGO's. There were a few cases which greatly exceeded these limits, i.e., one 11 year old - $20-$25/week and one 16 year old - $40/week.

b) Parents: Many of the 70 parents interviewed did not know how much their children spent at CVGO's, however, the two-thirds who reported that their children play estimated that they spend $1-$10 per week, with the majority of these falling in the $3-$5 range. The children they reported as players ranged from ages 7-17, mostly boys between 12 and 16. About ten per cent thought that their children spent all of their allowance on games.

c) CVGO managers: The 35 managers interviewed estimated typical amounts for young players as being between $1-$2 on weekdays and $3-$5 on weekends. Most managers could recall only a few instances of youngsters exceeding the limits significantly. They claim that the "heavy spenders" are late teen-age and young adult males.

d) Police and social workers: Several social workers and police who were interviewed for this study reported a few similar cases but these were always taken to be the extremes. They had no evidence that this represented anything like typical young player habits. This "sample" always involved children who had come into police or social worker contact for problems not directly related to video play.

2. Direct observations

Direct observations of change booths and machine play suggest that it is unusual for younger appearing players to get more than $1-$2 worth of quarters on a weekday. $4-$5 spending was more common on weekends but still unusual for this age group. Similarly, those who looked to be 13-16 generally spent about $2 on weekdays and rarely more than $5 on weekends. Some late teens and young adult males were observed getting one or more $10 rolls of quarters but these were exceptional cases. Girls were rarely noticed getting more than $1 per session.

Figures gathered by direct observation only represent a per session playing cost. A total weekly figure would depend on the average number of sessions/week, taking into account that weekday spending tends to be less than on weekends and some sessions are only used to "go and watch a friend".

3. Other studies

Only two studies were located which had collected information on spending patterns and neither provided age range breakdowns.

A phone survey conducted by Atari of 2,000 young people identified teen and young adult males as the heaviest spenders but only a small fraction of those reported spending more than $5 per week.

The Brooks self-report studies of 973 young people aged 10 - 18 found that about two-thirds spent less than $3 per week, one-quarter spent from $3 per week and, of the remainder, more than one-half spent less than $10 per week.

B. IMPACT ON ATTENDANCE PATTERNS OF SPENDING

1. Interviews

a) Players: Players report two typical patterns of attendance at CVGO's, either one to two times per week or four to five times per week. About two-thirds of the respondents reported the latter pattern but this may be a result of their greater availability for inclusion in the study. More "occasional" players tend to play and leave, while "regulars" hang around before, during and following actual play.

b) Parents: Parents generally estimate that their children attend only one to two times per week. But a few Tough Love and Foster Parents claimed that their child's attendance was in the four to five times per week range.

c) Managers: Managers often report a small group of "regulars" who "seem to be around" most days but which consitute a small proportion of their total players. Regulars, who use the CVGO for more social purposes, may attend often but only play a few games each session. Nevertheless, they are still the largest weekly spenders among the young.

These attendance patterns combined with the per session spending reports and observations, are compatible with the spending ranges of $5 to $10 per week ascertained from the other sources.

C. IMPACT OF PLAYING PATTERNS ON SPENDING

Perceptions of heavier spending may be affected by a number of factors involved in playing patterns.

1. Direct observations

Observations indicate that as players become more adept at particular games, the per $.25 playing time increases significantly, something that might not be understood by infrequent adult players who find themselves playing at a $.25 per minute rate and assume the same must be the case for youngsters.

Observations conducted for the study found that playing times are more typically about five minutes but may last up to 30 minutes. Nevertheless, the more typical average observed during this study was about five minutes (close to several operator estimates of 3-5 minutes).

The total amount spent is affected not only by the individual's skill and available money but also by playing conditions. If others are waiting to play a particular game, "next play" is reserved by placing a quarter on the machine. This leads to a "play and wait" pattern. Sometimes a player will turn to a less popular "filler" game but often will wait for the next available turn on their favourite. Small groups often come to a CVGO and play a particular machine in a revolving sequence. The outcome of these patterns is that players may spend more time but less money during each CVGO visit.

2. Interviews

a) Players: Players admitted that a "substantial" investment of time and money is necessary to reach these higher levels of competence. There may be some unforseen consequences for this accomplishment, as was the case for one North Vancouver youth who was banned from one game by the arcade managers because he could "play all day" for a quarter.

b) Managers: As indicated in the above example, some managers restricted playing of those players who became so skillful on a machine that a game's profits were adversely affected. On the other hand, other arcade managers were pleased by the attraction and sense of challenge this generated in other potential players.

c) Industry representative: Industry representatives reported a goal of two to three minute turnover of players. Most machines have a "speed up" adjustment which they may use to decrease typical playing time. They asserted that this is to make the experience "more challenging" for the experienced player but the consequences for increasing the "drop" is obvious. This has to be balanced by the danger of discouraging repeat play if the game is too difficult.

3. Other studies

Brook's findings also indicate that the per $.25 playing time increases significantly as players gain experience with particular games. In this study, players estimated the amount of time they could spend on one play of their favourite game. The results were as follows: 5% - less than 10 minutes; 15% - ten to fifteen minutes; 20% - 30-60 minutes, and; 10% - sixty minutes or more.

D. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The conclusion that youngsters typically spend vast sums on a regular basis is not confirmed by any of the major sources utilized in this study. Few examples of young people spending amounts much in excess of $5 - $10 per week were documented.

These figures supplied by self-reports must be taken as rough approximations, as few players, parents or CVGO managers seemed to keep close track of amounts spent. Players often reported just spending "what they had" and most parents knew of amounts spent only by what their children had reported to them.

The researcher's request to provide a "weekly average" created a somewhat artificial orientation to the spending habits which did not seem normally to be used by the respondents, as there was usually much hesitation before the figure was provided.

Nevertheless, the relatively close fit among information obtained from interviews, observations, and "other studies" suggests that the $5 - $10 per week figure, varying directly with age and generally exceeded only by late teen and young adult males, is a good approximation of the true general case.

Spending patterns were also affected by attendance patterns and playing patterns. Attendance patterns reported combined with per session spending estimates were compatbile with the spending ranges of $5 - $10 per week. All indications are that as players become more competent, their playing time per $.25 increases significantly.

Determining whether a $1 - $2/session or $5 - $10/week spending rates are excessive depends, to a large extent, on what proportion of available funds this represents and where the money comes from. One might also want to take into account the comparable cost of other youth recreational activities, i.e., up to $5 for a movie, $6 - $7 for a record and so on.

A Ministry of Education video tape, "How Teenagers Spend Their Money", with a rather small sample, suggests that older Lower Mainland teens may spend over $25/week on food and leisure. Some up to $100/week. The boys tended to spend most on food and recreation: the girls spent primarily on clothes and socializing. This difference would be compatible with the low ratio of girls participation and spending at CVGO's. Seventeen "Eatons Youth Council" members estimated that they spent between $500 and $1,500/year in department stores.

The primary concern of the study, determining the CVGO influence on youth's illegitimate playing funds acquisition, requires information on youth's legitimate sources and amounts of income. This matter is addressed in the following section, with particular regard to young players spending in excess of the "typical" amounts.

The researcher's observations of spending, attendance and playing patterns at CVGO's, as well as other studies of these patterns, suggests the following:

1. Media reports of player spending seem to represent only the highest level of player spending activity. Only one respondent reported spending as much as $40/week and on the day he was observed he only spent $1. There were isolated reports of splurges, following holidays or income gained from B&E's, but these were rare and unsustained patterns.

2. The typical spending ranges were $.50 to $5 for those aged 12 and under, $5 - $10 for those aged 13 - 16 and often somewhat higher for older teens and young adults.

3. Patterns of attendance, player participation and playing conditions must be taken into account in order to understand the difference between perceived higher spending and the spending levels found in this study.

5.4 SOURCES OF YOUNG PLAYER'S CVGO PLAYING FUNDS

Determining whether the need for CVGO playing funds has motivated B.C. youngsters to use illegitimate means of acquiring this money can be attempted in two ways: either by obtaining direct evidence of funds stolen for use in CVGO's or by ascertaining that "typical playing fund amounts" exceed the typical amounts available.

Both kinds of reasoning seem to be used by those who perceive that illegitimate acquisition is often the case. There have been a number of examples, reported in the media and to the investigator by police and social service workers, of youths using stolen money to play. But as in the case of heavy spending, none of these sources can provide evidence that such cases represent anything but exteme exceptions.

A. INTERVIEWS

Phone interviews in 54 communities revealed concern with sources of playing income (home theft, B&E's) in only nine. These cases generally reported "suspicion" of illegitimate sources rather than evidence confirming it.

1. Players

Players aged from 8 - 16, who were interviewed, reported that they received allowances ranging from $0 to $15/week. These amounts tended to increase with the age of the respondent, $5 or less being typical for those 12 years old or under and $10 - $15 being typical for those aged 13 - 16. Older teens often had no allowance but did claim occasional or part-time work which provided income of $25-$100/week.

Almost three-quarters of the players reported some work income; paper routes, babysitting, deliveries, house or yard work were typical types of jobs. This was most common for those aged 13 and above. This figure is somewhat greater than the percentage of working teenagers reported in other sources but roughly compatible with Brook's findings. This disproportionate number of working youth among players may be explained by the possibility that only those with sources other than allowance can afford to play regularly. Every player interviewed who spent in excess of the "typical" amounts claimed job income sources beyond allowance.

Most of the players, after further questioning by the investigator, recalled that they got "occasional" additional money from parents. This was variously described as "treats", "begging money", "movie money", "pizza money", "something for the errand", "lunch money" and so on. Some portion of this money often found its way to the video games. Other "occasional" money was specifically requested and provided for game playing. This was particularly the case when parents attended the CVGO with the youth or if they "came across" a game when they were together.

2. Parents

Parents reported somewhat lower allowance figures, often in the area of $3 for those 12 and under, averaging but rarely exceeding $10 for the 13 - 16 age range. About one-half of those with children 13 and older reported that their child had other sources of income, either from work or some combination of gifts and savings, but often were not sure what that might amount to each week. Parents, like the young respondents, did not initially include "occasional" money in their estimates of "average weekly income", but reported a range of $1-$5 for those under 12 and $10-$50 for those 13 and up. Only a few "foster" and "Tough Love" parents reported any concern about stealing from home or other theft as a source of youth's money but none alleged that this was strictly for CVGO play; rather, they assumed it was for drugs. No parent estimated that the amount spent on games was greater than that typically available, legitimately, each week. About one-quarter of the parents believed that their child spent most of these weekly funds on games, and considered this a problem.

B. OTHER STUDIES

In approaching the general issue of income sources, the researcher made an effort to find systematically collected information but was generally unsuccessful. Home economists, the Secondary School for Consumer Education Program of the Minstry of Education and other sources were investigated but only anecdotal information was available. Scattered sources suggest that there is considerable variation across and within young age groups in Canada. One 1982 Ontario study found that for ages 8 - 18 the average range of allowances was from $.75 to $8 but that extremes were from $0 to $25. The same study found that Statistics Canada figures for 1980 indicated that more than one-half of all Canadian teenagers have tax reported job income.

A representative of B.C. Foster Parents estimated that the typical average allowance from foster parents was $5-$15/week.

The Brooks study found that although 70% of his respondents did not receive an allowance, about 85% listed parents as a primary source of game playing money. Almost 70% reported that they got money from their parents "by telling them when they needed it". "My job", "odd jobs" and gifts are listed by 50 - 75% of the respondents as other primary sources of playing funds.

C. SUMMARY & DISCUSSION

The reports of "average weekly income" from youth and parents may actually underestimate the true figures because neither group tended to include "occasional" money in their initial responses. Occasionally providing money on request seems to be a rather common practice of parents and to the extent that it is, regular weekly income figure estimates would be too low. Both parents and children report that some parents provide money just for games, particularly when accompanying children to arcades, and it appears that this is outside of "regular" sources and amounts initially reported.

Taking the likelihood of this "underestimation" into account and comparing the information on spending presented in the foregoing chapter with this material on income acquisition suggests the following:

1. Reported and observed spending falls within or near the range of typical income available to particular age groups, and where it exceeds that amount, the difference can probably be accounted for by occasional money received by the child. There are instances of stealing to play, or at least of stolen money being used to play (in addition to buying drugs, food, records, etc.), but their rarity and the infrequency of reports of parental or other's concern about theft suggests that they represent the exceptional case;

2. Therefore, there is no substantial evidence that the vast majority of young players must rely on anything but legitimate sources of income to play at CVGO's, at the reported or observed rates. The common sense view that "they must be stealing in order to play so much" seems to be a product on an overestimation of actual spending and an underestimation of typical available income for young people these days.

5.5 POLICE EVIDENCE OF CVGO - YOUTH CRIME LINKAGE AND THE ISSUE OF YOUTH CONGREGATION

It is important to give some detailed attention to police perceptions and evidence for the following reasons:

1. Police in a number of communities have been an active force in the promotion of by-law restrictions on CVGO's;
2. Given the police responsibility for monitoring, preventing and responding to criminal activity, they can be expected to have the most direct

contact with such activity and most systematically collected information about its occurence;

3. Typically, it is police testimony that is used in Council and Court hearings to establish the presence of CVGO problems.

This section reviews police perceptions, available evidence on types and amounts of CVGO-youth crime links, and consequent police action.

A. POLICE PERCEPTIONS

1. The 54 Community Survey

Respondents in the phone survey reported serious problems in about one-third of the 54 communities. Evidence of problems consists of recorded complaints and information generated through police enforcement and monitoring activities. The following are the results by type of concern and number of communities reporting the problem: (See Appendix B1 for details).

1.	Complaints from schools regarding lateness & truancy	6
2.	Complaints about "hanging out", littering or public harassment	12
3.	Complaints about CVGO late night hours	4
4.	Suspected CVGO-related home theft, B&E's, pickpockets, parking meter break-ins	6
5.	Suspected drug use or sale at CVGO's	7
6.	Known drug use or sale at CVGO's	5
7.	Vandalism related to CVGO's	4

In many cases, these figures reflect multiple types of problems reported from one community.

B. POLICE EVIDENCE

As can be seen, these reports consist of a mix of unconfirmed complaints, "suspected" drug or theft connections and "known" violations, the latter constituting a rather small proportion of the whole. The task at hand is to differentiate "suspicions" and unconfirmed complaints from problems whose occurence has actually been confirmed and documented.

Given the mixed quality of the material supplied through the phone survey, detailed attention has been given to the more complete information and documentation acquired from the ten communities which were visited (Vancouver, Richmond, Surrey, Burnaby, New Westminster, City of North Vancouver, Prince George, Saanich, Sidney, Victoria and the Western Communities).

Most of the ten communities reported that they do not have systematically collected information on possible CVGO-Youth crime connections. This seems to be a result of a general lack of data collection facilities or practices. Police from most of these communities have submitted reports to their community governments regarding the presence of CVGO-youth crime linkage. These reports generally consist of a mix of suspicions, citizen complaints and police observations similar to those reported in the phone survey.

In the three communities where localized B&E's are alleged to be linked to CVGO presence, namely, Surrey, North Vancouver and the Western Communities, actual plots of B&E's have been done only in the latter two. They revealed a pattern of concentration in the general area of an arcade. Surrey police "have the impression" of a similar pattern. The other seven communities asserted no such pattern, nor did they have evidence of any.

Other "evidence" of CVGO-B&E linkage consists of isolated reports from individual youngsters who have been apprehended for B&E's and reported that they spent some of the stolen money in CVGO's. However, individuals who admitted this connection constituted a tiny proportion of those implicated in B&E's (one out of 50 in Burnay, one in Richmond, and so on). It is only in the Western Communities that a higher frequency of this pattern was alleged.

Vancouver, where the primary concern has been with "disturbances" created by congregation, has produced a systematic review of police calls regarding CVGO's. During one 23 day period, they found 14 such calls for police attendance "directly resulting from youths in premises" with video machines. None of the other nine communities have recorded calls or police attendance this systematically, nor did they claim anywhere near this frequency of complaints.

Vancouver, Richmond and the Western Communities have conducted casual observations of CVGO's, reporting the presence of "known" young offenders and drug dealers. North Vancouver police conducted a surveillance in connection with a "B&E sting operation" (police posing as buyers of stolen property) which revealed than an arcade and a local MacDonald's Restaurant served as contact points for members of five separate B&E gangs.

Western Communities police reported the only case of confirmed drug use within an arcade, though police from other locales reported observing drug use or sales in the vicinity of certain arcades. Few reported any apprehensions as a result of these observations. This gap between "known" or "suspected" drug activity and enforcement practices seems to be the case in many instances of "known" drug activity.

There were numerous examples of unverified complaints of illegitimate activity associated with arcades. In one case in Burnaby, there were 18 complaints about a CVGO location but regular surveillance conducted by several officers over a period of days did not reveal a single violation.

C. THE SEARCH FOR ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

One source which police mentioned, but had apparently not employed in their examination of possible CVGO-youth crime linkages, were the incidence and charges data they supplied monthly and annually to B.C. Crime Reports. The investigator therefore undertook to examine these data. Figures in selected B.C. communities (Surrey, Prince George, Vancouver, Victoria, Saanich, New Westminster, Richmond, and Burnaby, constituting most of the communities visited) and figures for the Province as a whole, for 1979-82, were examined. The categories of break-enter-theft and theft under $200 were reviewed, as these seemed the most likely types of crimes that would serve as sources of income to play.

As some information on bylaw activity, arcade expansion patterns and police perceptions of arcade related crime in these communities was aready in hand, it was anticipated that increases or decreases in these particular crime rates might reflect patterns of expansion and regulation of CVGO's. "Reported incidents" were reviewed, along with "juveniles charged" and cases "informally disposed" of. The second category is relevant to the population in question and the third is expected to inversely affect the second, as diversion reduces charges.

An examination of these figures, across communities and over time, revealed no obvious or consistent relationship with CVGO expansion or community regulation. Reported incidents for the Province as a whole show only minimal increases during the years of CVGO expansion (1980-82). Increases in the "juveniles charged" rates show an increase in 1980 and 1981 but these are accompanied by decreases in "informal dispositions", 1982 shows a significant decrease in charges with some decrease in informal dispositions.

The variability of patterns in the selected communities makes it difficult to describe any central tendencies. "Reported incidents" and "juveniles charged" rates increase and decrease over this period, depending on the community observed, but with no clear relationship to regulatory activity: New Westminster, with rigorous CVGO regulation since 1979, shows a reported incident rate increase in 1980, a drop in 1981 and an increase again in 1982. Prince George, which has minimal regulation, shows a lower "reported incident" rate in 1980 than in 1979 and a significant decline in 1982. Surrey, which has implemented arcade age and location restrictions, displays a relatively consistent pattern of rate increases in reported incidents over the three year period of changes in regulation. In Vancouver, during 1982, when police concern about possible CVGO criminogenic effects was greatest, the "juveniles charged" rates were lower than the previous year.

Even in the cases where rates appear to increase during periods of CVGO expansion or decrease following greater CVGO regulation, there is no direct way of confirming that CVGO related factors are the cause of such differences.

D. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Reports from the 54 community survey and the ten communities visited displayed a preponderance of "suspicions", unconfirmed complaints and other relatively "soft" or impressionistic evidence. In the cases where more systematic work had been done, there were a number of methodological difficulties. "Studies" of linkage between localized B&E patterns and CVGO's were always compounded by an inability to control for the co-presence of shopping areas, malls, schools and other congregation points, which might have contributed to the pattern reported. Reviews of police activity did not establish that the period sampled was representative of the general case, nor were they compared with police action associated with non-CVGO locations. Reports of police observations of arcades were often unclear in terms of which or how many of the available CVGO's were involved.

In the North Vancouver case of the arcade used as a B&E contact point, it must be noted that a chain restaurant was also involved; no evidence was provided that "recruitment" into the illegal activity took place in the arcade; all members of the five "independent" groups of B&E offenders had had previous police contact unrelated to arcades; and there was no information that the thefts had been carried out in order to play arcade games. It seems that the arcade and restaurant were involved only to the extent that they constituted a place to meet.

Major problems such as these make it extremelly difficult to ascertain the general frequency of problems, what proportions of CVGO's are involved, how this compares to non-CVGO locations or whether these problems are specific to CVGO's.

The sporadic nature of concern expressed and of information gathering by police and other groups make generalizations about the situation in B.C. problematic. It is possible that more adequate information exists but has not been brought to the attention of the police informants contacted in this study.

Some general conditions can, however, be presented on the basis of collected material:

1. CVGO's were perceived as serious contributors to youth crime in one-third of the 54 communities investigated.
2. There was great variation in the range of police connected complaints but they fell into two main categories - a) those asserting that theft is involved in acquiring money for CVGO play, and b) those asserting that it is the congregation of young people that is responsible for problems of public harassment, loitering, littering, vandalism, drug sale and use.
3. "Evidence", for the most part, consisted of unconfirmed complaints and suspicions of drug or theft activity. There was direct evidence of drug use or sale at several arcades but it was not possible, on the basis of the data available, to determine how many CVGO's were involved or how common a problem it was at those arcades observed.

4. The evidence on CVGO related B&E patterns was insufficient to establish a direct connection.

5. The information provided by youth B&E patterns was insufficient to conclude that any more than a tiny proportion of youth related B&E's are motivated by or connected to CVGO participation.

6. There was insufficient information on other non-CVGO locations to determine how they compared in terms of problems associated with congregation and thereby establish any problem generating characteristics that might be particular to CVGO's.

7. An examination of figures relating to crime rates and expansion and regulations of CVGO's does not appear to indicate that the introduction or expansion of CVGO's produces significant increases in youth crime activity, nor does it apparently indicate that increased regulation reduces such activity.*

It would seem that complaints regarding "economic" crime, in the form of theft from home, B&E's, or shoplifting related to CVGO's, represented a small proportion of complaints and had been substantiated in even smaller numbers. This is important, because it is the assumed financial demands of CVGO play that are alleged to differentiate it from other youth congregation points.

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*It must be noted that many police have little faith in the extent to which these figures represent actual crime sources and rate change, but as they are the best figures available, the foregoing analysis was attempted.

It is precisely the issue of congregation that is the source of most complaints from the public and the foundation of police impressions of the problems of CVGO's. It is apparent that a significant number of the complaints recorded were a product simply of the presence together in public of a considerable number of young people. Loitering was the most frequent complaint of all those recorded. (One officer from Burnaby reported an interesting example of the prevalence of public concern about groups of young people. A survey on "satisfaction with police service" was conducted which showed very low satisfaction with police in residential sections that had quite low actual crime rates. Further inquiry indicated that the source of low satisfaction was the presence of many secondary school students who made their way through the neighbourhood going to and from school. They apparently did not do damage to any property but their presence was a disturbance and constituted a threat. This tendency to distrust and fear young people in numbers may be the source of many "reported" difficulties with CVGO's).

The combination of complaints of loitering, disturbance, and police suspicions of drug sale or use around arcades have motivated police in many communities to promote greater CVGO restrictions. Police have been noticeably active in this regard in Vancouver, the Western Communities and Surrey but less so in other areas visited. Richmond police support more restrictions, as do the Sidney and Prince George departments. North Vancouver police are less active in promoting more restrictions but are currently consulting with their City Council. Burnaby, Saanich, Victoria and New Westminster all seem satisfied with the degree of present CVGO control even though they represent widely varying alternatives: Burnaby has very few restrictions; New Westminster has only one arcade, restricts access to those aged 17 or older and requires closing by 10 p.m.; Victoria only allows gamesrooms with four or fewer machines; and Saanich has many regulations governing CVGO's. (The general issue of community response and bylaw activity in regard to CVGO's will be discussed in the next section).

One confusing result in the study is that only one-third of the communities reported "serious" problems. If CVGO's have any inherent negative effects on the young, they should be apparent in most CVGO's, wherever they are located. This study's results suggest that this is not the case. It may be that the results simply reflect differing degrees of police or public tolerance of congregation.

Some police clearly expressed the opinion that such congregations are natural, will occur somewhere whatever bylaws are in place and might just as well be at a CVGO. These police supported CVGO's, to some extent, because such locations make it easier to find and keep an eye on young people in the community. These police often used outlets to make contact with youngsters and gather information on any youth problems in the community.

Other police advocated dispersal and discouragement of congregation. This may eliminate complaints from merchants or the public in the vicinity of CVGO's but no evidence was provided which would indicate that actual drug use, theft or other youth crime activities would significantly decrease with this discouragement of congregation. Since there is no evidence that these criminal activities had increased in the community as a whole as a result of CVGO's, this lack of evidence of decrease is not surprising. Some of the information does suggest that if an area already has a history of youth problems, CVGO's located there are likely to display these problems, if only because these problems are concentrated and more publicly visible at such locations.

5.6 COMMUNITY AND LEGAL RESPONSES TO CVGO's

This section addresses the general issue of community responses to CVGO's, including;

a description of the variety and frequency of types of responses;

a discussion of the use of bylaw regulation, and other options;

a description of relevant B.C. Municipal Act Sections with apparent relevance to CVGO bylaw regulation, including recent court decisions;

several case descriptions of community regulatory activity;

an analysis of the apparent impact of community regulatory activity;

industry responses to community CVGO regulatory efforts.

A. REGULATORY RESPONSES TO CVGO's: B.C. AND ELSEWHERE

Of the 54 communities surveyed, every municipality was found to have at least one video arcade or gamesroom (video machines added to an existing business). Most of the towns have only one or two; cities have from one to over 40; and districts have from two to 20. (See Appendix B1 for details).

Regulatory responses to this general presence vary as greatly as do perceptions. Fourteen communities have instituted CVGO specific bylaws; 11 are considering doing so; four have rejected such bylaws or deleted previously existing age restrictions on amusement centres; the remaining 26 have found existing regulation powers sufficient, have not had difficulties with CVGO's which would warrant much concern about regulation, or have been able to work problems out "informally".

This pattern is not unlike that found in the U.S. A study conducted by amusement machine operators, distributors and manufacturer associations found that in 1982, local communities in 31 states had video game legislation pending or passed. Thus, roughly one-half of U.S. states and one-half of B.C. communities surveyed have, or are considering, arcade specific legislation. Other countries have taken more drastic action. Several Asian nations have banned CVGO's outright (Phillipines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore) but most Western nations have been more receptive. In Britain, where a 13 year old robbed his family to play a video game, a Labour Party legislator proposed limiting players at the nation's 100,000 machines to those over 16. But his description of video game addicts with "glazed eyes, oblivious of their surroundings" who turned to crime in their search for cash to play the games caused laughter in the House of Commons (Los Angeles Times, April 24, 1983). Nevertheless, this pattern of a call for legislation in response to a single "shocking" incident is not uncommon in the U.S. or Canada.

B. REGULATIONS IN B.C.: MUNICIPAL ACT AND THE COURTS

In British Columbia, direct responsibility for local business regulation is in the hands of the municipalities. They are empowered by provincial legislation to pass bylaws within the framework of the B.C. Municipal Act but their actions are subject to review by the courts. (Vancouver and Victoria are exceptions in that their powers derive from original town charters which are also authorized by the Provincial Legislature).

The Municipal Act (revised statutes of British Columbia - 1979) empowers municipalities to:

1. Classify businesses - Section 504(1) - "The council may by bylaw classify businesses according to the type of business and may further classify each type of business according to the extent of the business on the basis of any of the following factors or combination of them in carrying on of the business that the Council deems appropriate to each class of business:

   a) The floor area uses;
   b) The ground area used;
   c) The number of people regularly engaged;
   d) The number of vending or other dispensing machines, appliances or things used; and
   e) The number of rental units maintained;

2. Licence and set fees for businesses - Section 504(2) - "The bylaw shall set out license fees payable for each classification established, and different licence fees may be established for different classifications.:

   Section 505(1) - "The Council may not impose under this part, for any one period (6 months), operation or premises, a license fee greater than the following amounts:

Village	$ 200.00
Town	$ 300.00
City or District (pop. 10,000 or less)	$ 500.00
City or District (pop. 10,000-50,000)	$1000.00
City or District (pop. over 50,000)	$1500.00

3. Regulate businesses - Section 526(1) - "The Council may by bylaw regulate the carrying on of business in the Municipality, to the extent not consistent with this or any other Act, for the purpose of protecting the public or preventing or minimizing nuisances and misleading business practices, and the regulations may be different for different classes of businesses."

4. Prohibit businesses - Section 527 - "Subject to Section 526 but without restricting the generality of that section, the Council may by bylaw, (b) prohibit for all or defined parts of the

> Municipality the operation of a public poolroom, billiard hall, cabaret, skating rink, bowling alley, dance hall, or other place of amusement."

Though other Sections of the Act are occasionally employed in municipal CVGO regulation, those listed appear to be the most frequently utilized. Thus, the range of "legal" options which municipalities may employ to regulate CVGO's include: total or partial prohibition through zonings; direct management through general business requirements (hours, ages of patrons, conduct); control through granting or suspension of licenses (Section 513); and, limitations through the imposition of varying licence fees.

Some or all of these powers have been utilized in the communities surveyed to do the following:

a) set operating hours for CVGO's

b) determine locations for CVGO's

c) set limits on the number of machines in CVGO's;

d) set time or age restrictions for young players (generally those under 16);

e) require posting of CVGO behaviour regulations;

f) set CVGO business and video machine licence fees;

g) require that "operators" be 19 years of age or older.

Implementation of such bylaws has often been opposed in the courts by individual managers or operators, sometimes with the assistance of an industry operator's association. This resistance has not been very co-ordinated in B.C., primarily as a result of failure to organize independent managers and the lack of integration between the levels of the industry (See 3 - The Commercial Video Game Industry in B.C.). The first challenges were based on claims that the existing bylaws contained no definition of "video machines" or "video arcades" and were therefore not applicable to CVGO's. Municipalities responded by including such definitions in local regulations.

Aside from issues of technical definitions of machine types and placements, the most frequent matter of dispute has been placing limits on the ages of players at CVGO's. Both the Quebec and U.S. Supreme Courts have been delaying appeal hearings on this issue for several years. In B.C., however, the right of municipalities to restrict players to those 16 or over has been upheld a number of times in cases originating in Surrey, Langley and Vancouver. The court has generally held that municipalities have the right to set such restrictions on the basis of 526(1) and accepted police testimony that CVGO's cause youth problems in their locales. Such "evidence" is of greatly varying quality, usually consisting of police reports on selected arcades, the ages of those "causing" the problems generally not being specified. The assertion of the "problem of congregation" seems to form the foundation for much of the court's reasoning on this issue. This was expressed in a recent B.C. Supreme Court decision. "One of the bylaw's intentions is to control the number of youngsters gathered in one place over an extended period. Difficulties in law can occur as a result of these congregations" ("City Wins Battle of Video Games" - Vancouver Sun, May 22, 1982). Concern is also expressed regarding the "protection" of the young, due to the alleged presence of "bad influences".

There is apparently some discussion in the legal community regarding these court decisions. Some suggest that the bylaws are "prohibitive" rather than "regulatory" and therefore fall outside of bylaw jurisdiction. Some concern is also expressed about the quality of the evidence of problems related specifically to CVGO's, suggesting that these bylaws are discriminatory in that many other locations which promote youth congregations are not similarly regulated.

At any rate, current court opinion in B.C. has been supportive of Municipal Bylaw restrictions on CVGO's; therefore the aforementioned bylaw options remain available to those who choose to apply them. Nevertheless, the investigator found that many communities still exhibit serious confusion about what they can or should do in terms of CVGO bylaw regulation. Until recently, most communities had limited information about the actions of others. But it now appears that the ten or so which are considering new regulations are collating policies and sample bylaws from around the Province, in order to produce their own.

The redundancy involved in these multiple efforts is a consequence of the lack of a central location of the acquisition of such information. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs has not gathered such material, nor systematically collected complaints about CVGO's, and has no policy recommendations with regard to CVGO regulation. The Ministry of Attorney General has collected no such information (prior to this study) and has not recommended any changes to the Municipal Act with regard to CVGO's. The Union of B.C. Municipalities has no standard policy recommendations and has only a few sample bylaws as resources for its members.

There appears to be some redundancy in a number of the new bylaws which prohibit youths from playing during school hours or late at night. S.113 of the School Act requires young people's attendance in school during regular school hours while S.931 of the Municipal Act provides general curfew power over children, which some communities have used, prior to adding late night restrictions on children at CVGO's.

While some police promote arcade specific bylaws in order to give them more leverage in obtaining cooperation with CVGO managers, it seems that existing regulations, including R.S.C. 290, S.513 (conducting business in a manner injurious to persons actually or apparently under the age of 16) already provides them with adequate means of exercising this influence. Existing nuisances and disturbances bylaws (RSC. 290-S.932) also provide a means for dealing with such problems occuring in the vicinity of CVGO's. (See Appendix C for bylaw details).

Some lawyers and others with long experience in municipal affairs reported being somewhat cynical about all the regulatory activity in relation to CVGO's. They asserted that such activity is often attempted only to serve immediate interest or pressure, rather than being founded on concrete evidence that a serous problem exists or indications that the proposed bylaw will be effective in regard to the particular problem at hand. These sources suggested that over the last few decades, at intervals of five years or so, there have been flurries of concern and civil action regarding youth activity (out too late at night, hanging out in pool halls, wild beach parties, rock concerts, drug use) which then dissipates until the emergence of the next concern.

C. COMMUNITY CHOICES OF OPTIONS IN REGULATING CVGO's

Given the bylaw options available, communities choose to make use of them in a variety of ways. Almost half of the communities surveyed reported no arcade specific bylaw activity, either because they had no serious problems, could not confirm complaints, or were able to work out informally the problems that did exist. Several communities found that just regulating arcades through existing zoning laws eliminated the reported problems so that no arcade specific bylaw were required.

While all municipalities appear to restrict CVGO's to commercial zones, White Rock has prohibited arcades through zoning bylaws and Surrey has banned any additional or replacement arcades. Some communities, such as Vancouver, have established distinctions between arcades and "gamesrooms" (four or fewer machines), prohibiting those under 18 from arcades and limiting available playing times in the gamesrooms for those under that age. Victoria has eliminated arcades but allows gamesrooms through restricting the number of video machines in any one location to two and restricting playing hours for those under 17 to the period from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saanich, which has a bylaw being used as a model by many other communities, has recently ammended it to prohibit gamesrooms within a 250 meter distance from school grounds. Burnaby places no restrictions on hours of operation or ages of patrons through business regulation but makes use of an intensive "operator initiation" process through its licencing procedure (see Appendix C for examples of municipal CVGO bylaws).

With regard to licence fees: Vancouver has a $100.00/arcade fee, business tax and a $10.00/machine fee; Burnaby has a $40.00/arcade fee, $43/machine fee; Surrey has a $2000.00/arcade fee and a $16.50/machine fee; District of North Vancouver has a proposed $100.00/machine fee (to a maximum of $3000.00/arcade). Such fees may be used to discourage arcade development, as in Surrey. Sidney, for example, has an arcade fee of $600.00; the only other business fees in that community over $100.00 are those for bankers, trust and loan companies or auctioneers.

Several important interests appear to be involved in the choice of options for responding to CVGO's, including: philosophy of council members regarding youth in the community; the willingness of local police to pursue additional regulation; the "business" atmosphere in the community (which may generally oppose any additional business regulation); the willingness of CVGO managers to cooperate with the muncipality to reach informal solutions; and the presence or absence of a municipal council member who is willing to take CVGO regulation on as a "cause".

Several case examples illustrate some of these factors at work. In 1982, Vancouver City Police noticed a substantial number of "disturbance" complaints originating around establishments which had video games. Operating under an existing bylaw which prohibited those under 18 from being in establishments which had "amusement" machines, they warned owners that they would begin issuing citations to those who allowed such use. This action led to the removal of machines from many locations throughout the city, including department, corner and fast food stores. Owners of the small businesses which had three or four video machines on their premises appealed to the B.C. Supreme Court, arguing that their type of establishment should not be subject to the age 18 restriction. The court upheld the police position but the City Council passed a new bylaw, expressing some concern about "excessive" regulation of young people amd exempting these types of businesses but placing hour restrictions on young players. Police were apparently dissatisfied with this action because it was precisely this type of small establishment that was the source of their recorded complaints.

In Prince George, by 1981, police and municipal official had recorded numerous complaints about arcades, primarily involving "hanging out" and "harassment". The City Council passed a bylaw prohibiting those under 12 from being in an arcade after 10:00 p.m. There was apparently some interest in placing more severe restrictions on the arcades but respondents reported that "pro-business" influences upon and within the Council successfully resisted the imposition of any further limitations on CVGO's.

Several communities reported that they had initiated CVGO regulation on the basis of only one or two complaints, combined with an "expectation" that they would soon be having the serious problems they had "heard about" in the Lower Mainland. In one eastern B.C. community, a local CVGO manager ran for council in order to attempt the removal of recently imposed CVGO regulations. He lost. In one Island community, a respondent reported that some members of council included "opposition to arcades" as a part of their election platform. They also lost. In a Lower Mainland community, an arcade manager resisted CVGO regulation by taking his case to court. Though he lost, a respondent reported that the manager's aggressive attitude towards the Council was a factor in leading them to ban any additional or replacement arcades. In another Lower Mainland community, a few apparently minor loitering complaints led to the passage of a bylaw restricting CVGO's to four or fewer machines. The owners of a major recreational centre, which housed a large number of machines and about which there were apparently no recorded complaints, were required to reduce their machine numbers.

Some communities which are now implementing CVGO bylaw regulations regarding school hours and school age children, have had no recorded complaints regarding truancy, nor have they received any submissions from school authorities asserting that CVGO's are linked to school related problems.

There appears to be some relationship between the severity of complaints and bylaw activity, but this may be a product of such complaints being collected systematically only by those municipalities who attempt regulation. Municipal type is also related to bylaw activity. Of the nine towns included in the study, only one has considered an arcade specific bylaw, and that was rejected. Districts tend to have regulations or are presently considering them. Large cities tend to have regulations and smaller ones not, but there are exceptions.

As previously indicated, a significant number of communities, particularly towns or small cities, have responded to CVGO's through less formal means. They found that operators were often willing voluntarily to agree to set standard closing hours, discourage loitering and littering, install bike racks, reassure concerned parents, honour parent's decisions concerning their child's CVGO participation and so on. These communities reported "no serious problems" after having had "a few initial complaints" following the introduction of a CVGO.

Regional districts represent a special case in terms of the options available to them. Since they are not "municipalities" under Provincial legislation, they must apply for "Laws Patent" to allow them to make use of specific sections of the Municipal Act. The Capital Regional District has recently filed just such an application, with the strong support of local police who report many and serious problems with several arcades in the Western Communities. There are, however, indications of very divided opinions within and among these communities concerning the necessity or desirability of increased CVGO bylaw regulation.

Even without bylaws, citizens who oppose CVGO's can still exercise influence, as was shown in one community when the owner of a local restaurant, threatened with a boycott if he added video machines, decided against the machines.

As this brief review of selected municipal bylaw responses indicates, a great variety of options are utilized. Approximately one-quarter of municipalities have CVGO specific bylaws, while another quarter are considering them. It is extremely difficult to determine why some communities choose specific CVGO bylaw regulations and others do not, or why they choose to regulate some aspects of CVGO operations and not others. In some cases of the application of a wide range of restrictions on CVGO's, municipal administrators suggest that they are taking "preventative action" based on the experience of other communities, even though the particular problems which the bylaw is intended to address have not been encountered in their own community.

Although it has been possible to discern some general tendencies in the relation between community type and level of complaints with bylaw activity, the response options and the forces brought to bear to require or resist them often display extreme diversity. One factor which might ameliorate this situation is knowledge of what responses seem to have been effective in terms of particular kinds of problems. The choice of options is clearly a political process and therefore likely to reflect historical community political conditions and practices.

D. IMPACT OF REGULATORY OPTIONS

Evaluating the effectiveness of various community responses is complicated by the fact that police departments and municipalities seem to have collected little information on CVGO problems following their response activities. Given this situation and the previously discussed problem of establishing the actual frequency of serious CVGO related youth problems, confirming decreases in problematic behaviour is no simple task.

The general pattern was that communities tended to report fewer complaints, whatever the regulatory action taken. Actions which were reported to reduce CVGO related problems included the following:

1. Relocation of the arcade - Nanaimo and Vernon reported that moving arcades from historically troublesome or "inappropriate" locations (areas having little experience with youth congregation) to other places, particularly malls, significantly reduced reports of problems with CVGO's. This response seems to have had the

greatest effect in reducing CVGO congregation complaints and negative congregation activities;

2. Dispersal of CVGO's - Victoria's allowance of no more than four machines in one location was reported to have resulted in few problems with congregation;

3. Regulating business hours - many communities reported that restricting CVGO operating hours to those of adjusting businesses provided public visibility which discouraged congregation problems such as vandalism;

4. Restricting the ages of CVGO players - New Westminster reported that denying arcade access to those 16 or under, reduced parental concern, cut down on absolute numbers of players and thereby reduced youth congregation problems;

5. Restrict playing hours for those under 16 - communities reported that this reduced late night youth congregation, complaints from schools, and customer, residents or parent complaints.

Unfortunately, the quality of evidence supporting the assertion that these are effective actions varies greatly. Not only is systematic information rarely available, different communities take different actions in regard to the same type of problem and yet most report reductions in complaints.

Police satisfaction with bylaw activity seems to vary with the extent to which they would prefer to discourage any youth congregations. Vancouver police would have preferred the banning of anyone under the age of 16 from machine use. Surrey, which achieved such a ban, continues to have congregation complaints about those 16 and older. (Interestingly, it is the older teen and young adult players who CVGO managers always reported as the source of their most serious behaviour and control problems). Prince George reported that its bylaw ban on those aged 12 and under after 10 p.m. had little effect on the incidence of problems, probably because this age group was rarely a source of behaviour problems but rather the object of "protection" concerns and complaints.

The wide variety of responses to CVGO's and the growing tendency of communities to implement "omnibus" bylaw formats (regulating locations, ages of managers and patrons, business hours, playing times for young patrons, rules of conduct and so on) reflects a "shotgun" approach to CVGO problems. The apparent desire is for bylaws to do all of the following: provide some control on excessive spending by those too young to manage it themselves; discourage truancy; protect young children from negative influences of older teens and adults, particularly drug or alcohol use; reduce theft motivated by a desire to acquire playing funds; reduce congregation and the actual behaviour problems or complaints that it generates.

However, as evidence substantiating the actual existence of these problems, particularly the first four, is lacking and in the case of most of the communities surveyed (See Section 5.4) it is difficult to assert that bylaws are necessary or effective in eliminating them. Nothing short of a total ban on players under 16 (unless accompanied by a guardian) can be expected to be effective in terms of controlling spending or preventing "negative influence". The same is the case with regard to CVGO motivated theft (though the proportion of such theft committed by those under or over 16 remains unclear). There is no substantial evidence that CVGO presence increases actual drug use or theft activity, or that bylaw activity has the efffect of decreasing them.

While complaints about "congregation" of youth may be reduced by regulations, it is arguable that such congregation and related public complaints will be shifted to other focal points in the community. Several Lower Mainland respondents reported efforts in recreation and community centres to provide programming for "kids with problems" which had to be cancelled due to local residents and merchant complaints about "congregation".

On the other hand, informal efforts to increase communication and cooperation among all interested parties may reduce anxiety, correct knowledge founded on rumours and thereby reduce parent concern, merchant complaints and other problems. Often it was reported that simple voluntary minor adjustments in business practices (common hours, discouraging litter or outside loitering) resolved any problems. In some cases, where no major action was taken, the community became "used to" the presence of the CVGO and concern appeared to fade.

Nevertheless, regulations appeared to have some impact on reducing complaints even where regulations imposed had never or rarely been enforced. For example, a number of communities have opted for a system of parental permission slips which players under 16, or in some cases under 14, must file with the manager in order to attend the CVGO. This researcher was never able to find a

CVGO in which these files had ever been checked by an enforcement officer. The more common practice is to set age limits on players, either during certain hours or at all times. No police or municipal offical reported records of any citation ever having been issued for a violation of this type of regulation. Field observations indicated that such violations did occur, although infrequently, but officials charged with responsibility for enforcement apparently did not appear to attend to the matter with much vigour. (There were reports of a few apprehensions being made in the area of CVGO's for drunkenness, fighting, drug possession or general disturbances but the charges were based on general criminal law, not arcade bylaw regulations).

There appeared to be some similarity between recent CVGO regulatory activity and past community actions regarding local curfews. Publicized problems regarding "youth out late at night" have motivated councils to pass curfew rules but several police respondents reported that vigorous enforcement soon faded away. These respondents reported that enforcement pressure tended to decline quite rapidly, that enforcement activity was "troublesome" and that this is a parental rather than police responsibility. This latter matter of "parental responsibility" frequently emerged in replies from respondents, including both police and those involved in the industry. They argued that youth's attendance at CVGO's and their spending activity were matters for parental choice and management, rather than for legal control.

The tendency of the number of complaints to decline as a result of any regulatory action may be a product of lowered sensitivity to a problem which has been "dealt with" and the need to attend to more pressing issues in the community. When there are complaints, there is pressure for police or council to do "something". Taking any substantive action may be sufficient to reduce this pressure and general public attention to CVGO's, particularly if actual complaints or public concern were not substantial in the first place. Enforcement practices seem to provide some support for this supposition in that regulations are often imposed but never enforced. This positive effect of any bylaw activity may also be due to the fact that the bylaws, whether restricting locations, hours, player ages or machine number, all have the consequence of reducing congregation, sites and numbers, which are the source of most complaints.

E. RESPONSES OF CVGO INDUSTRY MEMBERS TO COMMUNITY REGULATION ACTIVITY

As community interest, concern and resistance to CVGO's has increased, the industry has had to take such responses seriously and attempt a number of actions designed to moderate the concern and reduce the resistance. The multiple levels of the industry do not make this a simple task (See 1.2). It appears that competition between locations has led some to speak negatively of or initiate complaints regarding other outlets. This was reported by a Canadian magazine editor and experienced by the investigator during the course of this study. Managers, operators and distributors sometimes took advantage of the interviews to report on their competitors' poor or illegal business practices, such as locating CVGO's in areas already known to be trouble spots or violating game copyright laws. Visits to outlets confirmed that there is little cross location association and therefore limited opportunity for the industry to discipline itself in cases of problematic outlets. Location owners complain that "associations" want financial support but will not help them when they have problems with municipal councils.

In spite of this disorganization, elements of the industry have tried to respond to the public resistance and regulation described in previous sections of this report.

On the national and international level, the trade magazines, Playmeter, Replay and Canadian Coin Box, carry regular columns on how to avoid and respond to negative public reaction. Atari has produced and distributed a public relations package, including video tapes, other visual aids and fact sheets that local operators may use in presentation to councils or other interested community groups.

By far the most sophisticated response is to be found in A Community Relations Manual for the Coin-operated Amusement Games Industry which is produced and distributed by U.S. manufacturers, distributors and operators associations. Its contents are too diverse to list here but it includes: a history of "coin-op" machines; a description of the "anti-games" phenomenon game arguments; a primer on local political structures and procedures; strategies for effective community relations and management of outlets and a list of further resources. Although designed for the U.S., the investigator found it in use in a number of situations in B.C.*

*More widespread use of this Manual would reduce current CVGO-community conflicts. It would also be a useful resource for Citizen Groups and Council members.

The investigator attended several council and community group meetings where local industry members attempted to make their case for limited regulations and to refute negative claims about CVGO's. Reports on several other meetings were also gathered. Initially, operators always seemed to face a suspicious if not hostile audience particularly in the political atmosphere of councils where police concerns may be taken at face value. Operators may be seen as "outsiders" whose only interest is in maximizing the profits of their operations. Operators seemed less successful in changing the opinions of council members than they are with less committed, curious public groups. A meeting of social service and community workers in the Port Coquitlam, Coquitlam, Port Moody area (POCOMO), consisting of a panel discussion involving Vancouver Police, area social workers, two S.F.U. students who had done some research on local CVGO's and two industry representatives, provided an example of this latter case. It appeared to the researcher that the audience was much less convinced by the material presented by the police than by that presented by the owner and operator. (The investigator noted that the operator representative quoted directly from the previously mentioned public relations manual. The police case rested almost entirely on "common sense" and examples drawn from the Granville Strip. The report of that meeting would make worthwhile reading for anyone interested in B.C. responses to CVGO's).

All three of the major operator/distributors who were interviewed in the course of the study claimed that they had made a serious mistake in not anticipating the wide and vigorous public reaction to the rapid expansion of CVGO's. They attributed much of the reaction to the "newness" of video and explosive growth in the whole video phenonmenon, which they felt induces suspicion and discomfort in adults who are unfamiliar with video and computers in general. They asserted that actual problems with CVGO's are rare. They also asserted that similar problems occurred at all other teen congregation points but that the negative publicity is centred on CVGO's. They pointed out that police have little evidence of CVGO-youth crime links and that most problems occur outside the CVGO where the location managers have little control and no legal responsibility.

These representatives took pains to convey an image of CVGO's as serious, legitimate businesses providing a "relatively" low cost entertainment for all members of the public. They were particularly anxious to have CVGO's seen as "family entertainment", in apparent hope of negating the "male-teen-hangout" image which is presently so widespread. They rejected the allegations of vast profits, claiming that their 10 - 15% returns on investment are typical and fair, given the substantial investment required to open an operation. They argued, and location managers agree, that no one would want to risk such an investment by allowing illegal or disruptive activities to occur in outlets. They noted that financial success with CVGO's is not guaranteed, mentioning a number that had failed and rapid owner turnover in many locations. They suggested that CVGO businesses which did fail were often the product of poor business management and likely to be those which had actual behaviour management problems at the location, which created a bad reputation and discouraged business.

Several local distributors and some members of one "Western Operators" association have become particularly active in trying to influence community bylaw activity. They do not oppose all regulation, but instead promote bylaw formats that they "can live with". They obviously hope to avoid severe restrictions such as the four machine limit, ban on those under 16 and early closing times. They circulate a "model bylaw" or the Saanich bylaw (see Appendix C) to community councils which appear to be considering some bylaw activity.

Interviews with location managers revealed a high sensitivity to public perceptions about their operations. This was particularly apparent when the investigator revealed his sponsorship by the Ministry of the Attorney General. Only one manager, a young female in one of the few locations that showed indications of some drug activity, refused to be interviewed. Most appeared anxious to report "their side" of the issue. They reported that they attempt to discourage congregation outside their outlets because they know large gatherings of youth tend to be looked upon with suspiciousness or anxiety by adults in most communities. They reported few behaviour management problems and most reported good relations with the police. They admitted that individual problems do occur but said that banning a player from the outlet is generally a sufficient means of control, (See 5.2D on Supervision for more details). However, they reported that they do call in police on suspicion of drug activity or in response to "young adult" violence.

CVGO industry members at all levels in B.C. appeared to be willing if not anxious to cooperate with municipalities and police in regulation and management efforts, to control real or perceived problems which involve CVGO's. Nevertheless, they are acting to moderate "unnecessary" regulation or "excessive" business fees, which reduce the financial viability of their operations. They argued that if regulatory activity, police action and their own efforts helped to clean up the "few bad" operations (like those on the Granville Strip) then the operating climate for all members of the industry would improve. Police, in general, suggested that "most" managers in B.C. are "pretty good". The poor managers which are the exceptions have, in many cases, been removed.

F. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Community and legal responses to CVGO's in B.C. and elsewhere suggest that there is some continuing confusion regarding the necessity and effectiveness of the use of bylaws to control CVGO growth and management or to remediate particular alleged difficulties. Roughly one quarter of the communities surveyed have made use of this option, another quarter are considering it and the remaining half have either rejected bylaw use, removed relevant bylaws, effected "informal" responses or found that no response was required.

Those communities which have chosen to regulate through the use of CVGO specific bylaws initially addressed different issues (definitions of machines, hours of business, ages of patrons, location, ages of managers, number of machines, etc.) but there is a growing trend to attempt "omnibus" regulations which treat all of these matters.

Recent Court decisions in B.C. have validated community use of the Municipal Act to effect CVGO specific regulation but total bans and rigid age restrictions have been appealed and others are likely to follow.

While most communities express satisfaction with the options they have chosen, those employing "informal" means appear to have had fewer difficulties in the response process. This may be because they had fewer initial real problems with CVGO's but it seems that not politicizing the issue results in less conflictual solutions. Members of the industry, for the most part, now express a willingness to cooperate in the regulatory process, hoping to avoid "excessive" regulation.

As available data is insufficient to determine that CVGO's promote theft, drug activity, or other behavioural problems, it is insufficient to determine that regulation reduces them. Regulation activity does tend to reduce congregation complaints.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The primary concern of this work has been to explore the possibility that CVGO's might contribute to criminal or other delinquent activities on the part of young people in B.C. The initial assumption was that the expense of playing might lead young people to attempt to acquire playing funds illegally. Over the course of the study, it was found that various interest groups in the communities studied had a number of other CVGO related concerns. Therefore, an effort was made to examine those issues as well.

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions are based on survey material from 54 B.C. communities, interviews and observations in 10 communities, a review of current literature and reports on possible CVGO-youth crime linkages and a number of other sources. (See Appendix A-1).

The study revealed great variety in CVGO types and atmospheres, as well as player types, complaint patterns and perceptions of CVGO's in general, all of which make simple generalizations about CVGO's and their impact somewhat difficult. Nevertheless, the following conclusions represent the dominant patterns which were discovered.

1. The assertion that young people _generally_ spend beyond their means was not confirmed. The amounts involved, up to $5.00/week for those 12 and under and up to $10.00/week for 13 - 16 year olds, were found to be within the means of most youngsters in these age groups. Some combination of allowance, part-time work and "occasional money" from parents and others accounted for most youth income and this appeared sufficient to cover typical playing costs. There were exceptions to these spending patterns but the respondents all reported sources of legitimate income which were enough to cover their higher spending rates. (See 5.3).

2. Evidence of youths stealing, _in order to play_, was not substantial and seemed to involve only a tiny proportion of active players. It is apparently the case that illegitimately acquired funds are sometimes spent in CVGO's but this probably only displays the fact that CVGO's are a prime consumer spending location for most young people, so that some of their money, however it is acquired, is likely to end up there. "Money for drugs" is much more frequently cited as the reason for young people's theft and B&E activity (See 5.4).

3. The use of drugs within CVGO's could be confirmed in the case of only one CVGO although there were scattered reports of drug use and sale in the vicinity of some CVGO's. A recent Gallop Poll found that approximately one half of the youth in B.C. use "soft" drugs at one time or another. Therefore, it is not surprising that some drug activity could be found around CVGO's; but there is no substantial evidence that CVGO's are _directly_ related to drug use. To the extent that there is some connection, it seems to be a product of the _congregation_ that occurs at some CVGO's and not related to CVGO playing activity or CVGO management (See 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4).

4. Although theft for playing funds was taken to be the most serious problem likely to involve CVGO's and the young, the most frequently reported concern was the congregation that CVGO's sometimes produce. Littering, loitering, vandalism and "public harassment" were the most typical complaints but they varied greatly in terms of frequency of occurence and seriousness, and tended to be restricted to a few locations in each community. (See 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4).

5. Instances of complaints about CVGO's promoting tardiness and truancy in schools were also relatively rare and there was no evidence found which established a general increase in either, following the introduction of a CVGO. (See 5.1A).

6. No evidence could be found which confirmed that CVGO's encourage criminal activity or that "recruitment" for such activity takes place in CVGO's. Where some association between B&E activity and CVGO's has been alleged, the evidence suggests that CVGO's merely serve as a meeting place for those already known to each other and previously engaged in the illicit activity. (See 5.3 and 5.4)

7. Contrary to reports that "the kinds of kids" who go to CVGO's are disreputable types, the investigation found that a wide cross-section of B.C. youth attend them, experiencing no trouble as a result of their participation. Some outlets did seem to have a larger proportion of "rough" young people. This was generally a reflection of the area in which the CVGO is located and the tendency of young people to associate with "their own kind" when possible. The domination of a CVGO by such "rough" youths tended to discourage attendance by others and

this may have lead to the financial failure of outlets where "just hanging around" is the main activity. Outlets depend for survival upon paying customers. (See 5.3).

8. Supervision in most CVGO's tended to be adequate. There were few reports of behaviour problems inside CVGO's and none were observed. Protection of property and machines was a primary concern of CVGO managers and most appeared extremely sensitive to activities which might generate complaints from merchants, residents or police, so they attended to disruptive or drug activity with some vigour. In many communities, CVGO operators were quite active in monitoring and reporting potential problems to police. (See 5.1 and 5.5E).

9. CVGO's located in malls tended to have the fewest problems while street locations in historically troublesome areas or "isolated" small "secondary use" locations in residential areas tended to produce the most complaints (See 5.1).

10. Allegations of vast, guaranteed income from CVGO's appeared to be somewhat exaggerated. Most of the communities which were visited had CVGO's which had failed or were in the process of doing so. Current evidence suggests that the boom in CVGO expansion has already passed and that consolidation of outlets and the failure of poorly managed or over extended operations is the likely pattern for the near future. Competition alone may result in the elimination of some of the more "troublesome" locations as a "poor reputation" tends to discourage the wide variety of patrons required by profitable operations. (See 1.2, 5.3).

11. The fact that only one half of the communities studied had found it necessary to implement or consider implementing CVGO specific bylaw regulation

suggests that there is nothing intrinsic about CVGO's that would make them a source of community problems. Their central problematic feature tends to be that they can result in the congregation of large numbers of young people and these youth may engage in disruptive behaviour, however, it may be that the suspicion or expectation that they might be disruptive or a low community tolerance for such a gathering, contributes to community restrictions as much as does actual youth behaviour. (See 5.1)

12. At the present time, few communities in B.C. continue to experience serious problems with CVGO's. Community responses, ranging from "benign neglect" to total bans, all seemed capable of reducing the level of community concern about CVGO's. Negative media attention tended to promote public consciousness of CVGO's as "problems" and put pressure on local councils to "do something" about them. It is clear that no "standard" response would be useful or necessary for all communities, though the investigation has found that several kinds of considerations are likely to prove useful for communities who wish to consider responding to the presence of CVGO's. These are reflected in the recommendations. (See also Executive Summary and Recommendations).

13. The legal position with regard to CVGO regulation through municipal bylaws is in flux in a number of national, provincial and local jurisdictions. Although restricting young peoples' access to CVGO's in B.C. has traditionally been upheld in Provincial Courts, it is possible that appeals based on claims that current arcade specific bylaws are: "prohibitive" rather than "regulatory"; discriminatory against CVGO's among all youth congregation areas; based on insufficient evidence of negative effects; or even that their intent violates a right to "freedom of

association" - may be successful in this or other jurisdictions and lead to their repeal. (See 5.5 and 5.5B).

14. It appears that much current CVGO bylaw regulation may be redundant, given existing regulations on nuisances, zoning, curfews, school attendance, licence granting and suspension, etc. (See 5.5B).

15. It would seem that CVGO regulation to "protect the young" is not called for given the interactional conditions that were reported and observed in CVGO's.

6.2 DISCUSSION

The notion that we are entering, if not already emeshed in the "age of the computer" is not a new one. There is evident public concern over the impact that this is having or will have on our daily lives and concern with how young people are to be prepared to deal with it. While many seem to assume that the problems emerging from this trend will be new ones which will call for new solutions, there are also aspects of this phenomenon which are simply a result of renewed age old conflicts within communities. Commercial video games and the organization of their access to members of a community, young and old, seem, in an important sense, to represent the latter case.

A central concern of all social communities has always been the determination of the rights and obligations of the young as they are prepared for adult membership and responsibilities. All cultures have tradition points which mark the movement of an individual from child to adult status. Our modern Western society has, to a large extent, blurred this transition point by generating an extended period of intermediate status, namely, adolescence. This is often a troublesome period because it is not always clear to which aspects of childhood or adulthood the individual is expected to conform. This tension is generally expressed in the varying degrees of freedom or control which the community decides its young should experience. A goal of limits imposed by the community is to protect the young from that which they are not yet able or prepared to handle, but to do it in such a way as to prepare them to manage such matters as they move into adulthood.

The accomplishment of this goal is an extremely difficult task. The young often resist adopting the values and behaviours of the adult authorities responsible for their rearing; they adopt some aspects but not others, exaggerating the expression of the adopted form beyond the recognition of adults or rebel outright in rejection of adult intentions. In our society, these relations are complicated by the multiplicity of values, behaviours and sources of influence to which the young are exposed. Parents, schools, police authorities, peers, media, technology and consumer promotion are often at odds with one another in encouraging particular activities or attitudes in young people.

Adults and the community in general are perpetually concerned with the management of "proper" influences on the young and the control of influences which are thought to generate social or criminal delinquency. The advent of CVGO's has presented many communities with a new situation for the expression of these conflicting goals and influences.

CVGO's present us with a curious combination of social forces: the pressure to consume interfaced with "training to consume properly"; the distinction between computer "games" and computer "education"; promotion of computer acceptance and familiarity combined with ignorance and distrust of this technology's computer games as harmless fun and their alleged promotion of criminal behaviour; distinctions between the perceptions of a generation which paid 5¢ for a candy bar and was raised on radio, and one which takes for granted a price of 50¢ for candy and is prepared to applaud and extend the capacity to interact with that most reliable companion since birth — the T.V. screen. The extension of this latter acceptance to the video screen is a logical one.

The mutual influence on these conflicting interests and forces is obviously complex and beyond the scope of this study; however, it is essential to understand that they are at work in the specific issue with which we are here concerned, namely, "Do CVGO's exercise a criminogenic influence on young people? If it is the case that CVGO's are intrinsically youth crime-problem generators then we should expect that any community which has them would experience similar increases in B&E's, home-thefts, drug sales/use, vandalism, etc. Yet this is clearly not the case.

It seems more likely that CVGO related youth problems and reactions to them are a reflection of the conditions and attitudes within the communities themselves. The conclusion that CVGO related youth behaviour is delinquent, in a criminal sense, is strongly affected by general attitudes towards the young and the "video madness" to which they are thought to be susceptible.

There appear to be a substantial number of communities which insituted regulatory activity on the basis of very few substantiated complaints which somehow tapped general suspicions and anxieties about arcades or pool halls and the general congregation of young males. Any congregation point for teenagers is likely to produce similar problems or the anticipation of them. MacDonald's Restaurants and other fast food outlets, corner stores, recreation centres, even schools, all produce their share of similar problems and concerns. Many police and others assert that some MacDonald's Restaurants create problems of at least similar magnitude but massive public relations efforts on the part of the huge chain have tended to obscure this. CVGO's seem to have attracted special attention, perhaps because they are unique to this generation and provide a focus for adult distrust and discomfort with the computer age. Much media treatment has publicized their negative possibilities. The mere fact that most arcades are often perceived as for young people and are in fact usually populated primarily by them, is enough to generate suspicion on the part of many adults.

The problems to which this work was more specifically directed resonate with these general concerns. For example, the assumption that video game involvement is "addictive", combined with the 25-50¢ fee per play, leads some to the conclusion that children must be spending vast sums on the games. This impression is reinforced when one hears that five billion dollars was spent on CVG's in the U.S. in 1982. An assumption that young people have restricted access to money leads to the conclusion that they must be getting it "improperly" if not illegally. They must either be using money provided for other purposes (lunches, savings, bus fare) or stealing it. This line of thinking forms the foundation for a strong negative assumption about CVGO's: that they promote theft. This study has found that such cases are rare.

Another example is the frequent assumption that communities must be wary of situations involving young people who gather without "proper" adult supervision. There is anxiety about what they will do in any such environment but particularly within the "alien world" of the CVGO. The "zapping, flashing, cacaphonous blasting" of the arcades; the incitement to violence and vandalism; the minds numbed by video, music, drugs and alcohol; the influence of "bad" kids on previously "good" ones, all are assumed by many to be the negative impacts of CVGO's. Evidence collected and generated in this study, however, does not support the conclusion that CVGO's have a criminogenic effect on young people. Another example of a negative assumption about the impact of CVGO's is in relation to young people's school attendance. The assumption of the powerful attraction of the games, combined with the notion that the primary active responsibility of the young is to work at their schooling, and adult awareness of some of the aversive features of school, leads to a conclusion that CVGO's must promote truancy. This truancy is in turn assumed, in many cases, to lead to other criminal activity. This study could not find any evidence of a substantial increase in truancy related to CVGO's.

Establishing the validity or lack of validity of these assumptions is not a simple process, not only because of the larger social forces we have touched on but also because information which is generated to support or reject them must be understood as an expression of the interest groups which provides such information and which may be in conflict with each other. Such groups, whether businessmen, media personnel, police, educators, parents or young people themselves generally perceive and present opinions and evidence which emphasizes and represents their own perspective and desires as much as any "objective truth".

One may turn to "social science", in hope of establishing the "truth", through accurate measurement of alleged behaviours and use of "formal" theory to explain what is occurring. To some extent, this investigation attempted to make use of this alternative. But its results were still influenced by what respondents chose to report, which was, in turn, affected by their own position in the situation and what they perceive to be "their" interests.

"Formal theory" has limitations as well, in that it also proceeds from certain underlying assumptions. For example, those who would reject the position that CVGO's are criminogenic are likely to employ versions of theory which claim that delinquency is a product of poor upbringing, broken homes or psycho-biological problems. In effect, kids bring their problems and adjustment strategies with them to CVGO's and only give expression to them in the way they participate or acquire money to do so. Those who support the notion that CVGO's "produce" delinquency reject the former "theory" but advocate the position which suggests that CVGO's provide the motivation (need to feed the machines) and the opportunity or means (association with those who know how and where to steal) to acquire the money. Versions of these theories or common-sense assumptions are also employed to explain "drug use" and its alleged connection with CVGO's, the former suggesting that the youth brings drug use with him and the latter that it is learned through negative associations or facilitated by opportunities provided by CVGO's. The limits of the "explanatory" power and the fact that proposed theories support underlying interests should be emphasized. The researcher maintains that: none of the "theories" is sufficient to explain the "cause" of delinquency; exposure to CVGO's is therefore unlikely to "explain" persistent delinquent activity; increased attention to CVGO's is likely to produce increases in measures of associated criminal activity (when no comparable measures are gathered regarding other social gathering situations such as fast food outlets, concerts, malls and other locations).

In sum, this study has found that youth crime and delinquency can only rarely be directly connected with CVGO's. Concern about CVGO related theft, vandalism, rowdyism, drug activity, school absenteeism and all other problems allegedly related to CVGO's tends to be greater than the situation warrants. There does appear to be a danger that young people will spend more than they can afford but it would seem that this must be primarily the responsibility of youth themselves or their guardians, as is the case with all other youth consumer behaviour. As there is no substantial evidence that playing itself or association within CVGO's is harmful to young people, severe restrictions on such play and association seem unnecessary. In communities where serious congregation problems are experienced, it may be necessary only to increase police patrols in the vicinity of the complaint generating locations, rather than restrict access to the CVGO for all young players. Police, understandably, may not welcome the additional effort which this may entail but it appears that the primary problems which have been found to be associated with CVGO's are essentially issues of public "street" policing rather than "internal" arcade regulation. (These matters will be dealt with more specifically in the following chapter).

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The great variety of CVGO types, conditions and community responses makes "general" recommendations somewhat difficult. Although no single response would be appropriate for all communities, there do appear to be a number of actions which would prove useful for various community interest groups who are considering some response to the presence of CVGO's. The recommendations which follow recognize the right of communities to protect themselves but also consider the rights of businesses to practice when their activities are harmless and the rights of young people to gather, play and socialize when their actions are responsible. It is understood that many police may initially support any restrictions which reduce youth congregations, as they feel this can reduce policing requirements, but the clear necessity of such restrictions should be established before such restrictions are supported.

7.1. GENERAL

1. The major recommendation of this study is that any interested community group thoroughly assess the CVGO situation in their community prior to taking substantive action.

   The intention here is to establish the necessity of action and produce information on the type of problem present so that response may be designed to suit it. Once information has been gathered on the types of confirmed problems, their frequency and seriousness, action may be taken that is appropriate for the particular situation. It is important to establish the actual frequency of the problems and their specific nature. Isolated or vague complaints should be checked out, preferably through direct observation, rather than being accepted at face value.

2. It is recommended that, as a general rule, increased communication and informal cooperation among interested parties be undertaken prior to more formal steps being taken. This often will entail actually visiting CVGO's rather than accepting second hand reports about them.

Given that different groups in communities are likely to have different interests in CVGO's, specific recommendations are provided in an effort to speak to these differences.

7.2 PROVINCIAL MINISTRIES AND THE LEGISLATURE

Based on the findings of this study it is recommended that:

1. No additional legislation should be introduced to facilitate or standardize community bylaw regulation of CVGO's as present legislation appears to be adequate for the variety of responses appropriate to different communities.

2. In the case of jurisdictions which do not have the right to employ the Municipal Act, such as regional districts, "Laws Patent" specific only to CVGO's or widely differing from the level of business regulation which is common in such areas should not be granted.

3. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs or the Attorney General should retain copies of this report and its collections of municipal CVGO files and bylaw formats, as a resource for communities considering bylaw activity. (See Appendix D-1)

7.3 MUNICIPAL COUNCILS

It is recommended that municipal councils:

A. ASSESSMENT

1. Ascertain an accurate picture of the CVGO situation in the community, including:
   a) how many CVGO's exist in the community and which are problematic;
   b) what types of problems are being experienced, by whom and how frequently;
   c) whether reports of the problems can be independently confirmed;

2. Visit allegedly problematic CVGO's and discuss public, police and council concerns with managers and players;

3. Hold well publicized meetings where interested parties may present their concerns and report on their own CVGO experiences;

4. Contact other municipalities generally similar to their own in order to find out what kinds of problems, if any, they have experienced and whether their responses to the problems were successful, taking care, however, to avoid assumptions that problems will necessarily be similar;

5. Attempt to determine if CVGO's have produced any actual increase in youth problems in the community and document those findings;

6. Consider the possible advantages of youths congregating in known areas of the community, where there may be more supervision and monitoring than if they were scattered throughout the community. If such congregations will not be tolerated in the community then a system of dispersal, such as that used in Victoria or in a modified version in Vancouver, may be considered;

7. Poll the local schools for reports of any CVGO related problems, prior to instituting school related CVGO regulations.

B. ACTION

8. Prior to instituting regulations which may be unnecessary, troublesome to enforce or perhaps legally contestable, attempt to achieve desired changes through informal cooperation. Many community and CVGO management interest are similar and a

cooperative as opposed to a conflictual relationship is more likely to achieve awareness and successful accomplishment of those interests. Burnaby's procedure is a useful model of this procedure (See Appendix C). "Informal" cooperation is most feasible in small communities but its advantages should not be ignored in larger communities;

9. Where possible, consider locating major outlets in enclosed malls or shopping centres, as their standardized hours, private security and high public visibility tend to reduce most sources of CVGO complaints;

10. Wherever possible tailor responses to specific and confirmed problems, i.e., late hours or youth congregation;

11. Attempt to get an accurate picture of location income levels so that license fees are reasonable and in line with those of comparable businesses;

12. Attempt to take into account the general availability of youth recreation opportunities in this community, the desires or needs of the particular youth group which the CVGO may serve and the negative effect on youth-community relations which may result from unecessarily restrictive CVGO regulations;

13. Rather than totally banning arcade access to those under 16, a phone contact-parent permission card system should be considered so that parents themselves may decide which arcades, if any, their child may attend;

14. Impose on CVGO's closing hours that are no more restrictive than other locations where youth may be in attendance, i.e. movies, bowling alleys, skating rinks and the like. Given the absence of a curfew, parents should have primary responsibility for their children's activities.

15. Do not ban CVGO's from the vicinity of schools, as there is no substantial evidence that their presence causes serious problems and such areas have already made their adjustments to heavy youth congregations resulting from the presence of schools;

16. When considering bylaw action, call for input from all concerned CVGO industry members well before attempting such implementation, so as to avoid problematic late resistance from operators;

17. Prior to making the decision to enact restrictive CVGO bylaws, the community should attempt increased policing in the area of problematic CVGO's. Increased police presence, by itself, may be sufficient to reduce any congregation problems.

18. Attempt to monitor the results of any regulatory action taken, both to determine if it was successful in alleviating the specific problems for which it was designed and to provide information for other communities with similar initial difficulties;

19. If the community determined that it is necessary to enact an "omninbus" CVGO bylaw, the Saanich Bylaw, excluding the near schools ban, is likely to be the best currently available option.

7.4 POLICE

A. ASSESSMENT

It is recommended that police:

1. Consider whether delinquent activity has increased or decreased in the community following the introduction of CVGO's by:
   a) monitoring calls to establish if reports of problems increase when CVGO's are introduced;
   b) attempting to confirm or evaluate the "seriousness" and validity of complaints received about CVGO's;
   c) questioning youth's apprehended for B&E's or theft in an attempt to ascertain whether the theft was motivated by a desire for video playing funds or if the proceeds were spent at one;

d) Reviewing or producing plots of crime or disturbance activity to ascertain any relationship to CVGO locations;

2. Compare problem types and rates occuring at CVGO's and other traditional youth congregation points;

3. Visit local CVGO's, both in and out of uniform, in order to obtain direct information on internal and near-by activities;

4. Prior to recommending age restrictions, attempt to establish whether the age group that would be excluded is actually generating problems;

5. Following #4, consider the possibility that restricting players to those 16 or over may increase problems by concentrating older troublesome types of youth isolated from the possibly moderating influence of younger players and those who may accompany them;

6. Consider the advantages of having CVGO's as central youth congregation points in the community prior to recommending "dispersal" regulations;

B. ACTION

It is recommended that police:

7. Increase policing in the area of troublesome CVGO's. The additional effort that this may require might be offset by a reduced patrol demand in the areas from which CVGO players are drawn or would otherwise be located;

8. Visit CVGO locations, to familiarize the manager with police concerns, establish a cooperative relationship, and share information which will help in preventing youth problems;

9. Consider making use of CVGO locations for police contacts with the youth community. This may help build less conflictual relations with youths who have a history of problems with the law and establish good initial relations with those who do not;

10. Prior to recommending bylaw changes, attempt to obtain the voluntary cooperation of local CVGO managers to make what have been established as specific and necessary changes.

7.5 LOCATION MANAGERS OR OPERATORS

A. ASSESSMENT

It is recommended that location managers and operators:

1. Assess potential locations well before deciding to place machines or an outlet in a particular area. If an area is known as a youth "trouble spot", then problems must be anticipated at the location;

2. Approach local police, school officials, residents and merchants to let them know of CVGO plans, so that any concerns or complaints that are likely to arise from these sources may be taken into account in establishing and operating the CVGO;

B. ACTION

It is recommended that location managers and operators:

3. Maintain contact with interested local groups (police, merchants, residents) in order to keep them informed about CVGO operations and provide opportunities to express concerns. These groups should be urged to visit CVGO's themselves in order to allay or make specific their concerns about them;

4. Strictly enforce any applicable CVGO regulations and where there are none, maintain reasonable business hours, considering CVGO location and other local closing times;

5. Use trained and responsible staff. This may require employing "older" managers who give an appearance of adult authority both to the general public and to young players.

6. In larger operations, particularly during busy periods, consider having one person in the change area and another "floorwalker" to increase supervision and make management's presence felt;

7. Where possible, contact schools or parents when a problem occurs with a particular child (for example, spending too much, behaviour problems, school lateness, or truancy). In general, the first step in reacting to problems should be taken by management, on its own initiative, rather than by other authorities acting as a result of complaints;

8. Encourage parent participation and attendance, perhaps with a free game or two for first time visits with a child;

9. Inform parents that a young person's access to the outlet will be restricted upon parental request;

10. Offer special rates for youth groups or reward good report cards with free games, in order to establish positive community group-school-CVGO relations;

11. Support community efforts to control troublesome CVGO's;

12. Maintain good contacts with local police as information exchanged with them may prevent problems for your operation and for the community as a whole;

13. Discourage congregations in the immediate vicinity of the CVGO, as this is the primary source of citizen complaints about outlets. Young players are more likely to cooperate if they know that such congregation produces problems for the location or could result in restrictions to their access to the outlet;

14. Consider voluntarily setting certain operating rules and informing police about them, in order to avoid more excessive regulation;

15. Where regulation seems inevitable, consider recommending regulation formats which would reduce community concerns and yet not be unnecessarily restrictive on CVGO operation;

16. Notwithstanding the fact that lawyers have been successful in negotiating bylaw contents between some operators and local councils, if possible, avoid the use of lawyers as it may set a confrontative atmosphere between CVGO management and the Council.

7.6 PARENTS

A. ASSESSMENT

It is recommended that parents:

1. Familiarize themselves with local CVGO regulations so that they will know if they are being violated in particular cases;

2. Ascertain the opinions of other parents, possibly through school related organizations, if it is thought that there may be a problem with a local CVGO;

3. Visit any CVGO which their child may attend, so that parents may form their own opinions about CVGO's on a first-hand basis.

B. ACTION

It is recommended that parents:

4. Discuss any concerns with CVGO managers, and complain directly to them if there is a problem. Inform CVGO managers if you do not want your child to attend;

5. In response to problems with a local CVGO, have a parent representative meet with the CVGO manager to attempt to

alleviate the situation. If that is unsuccessful then parents may want to approach local police or municipal officials;

6. In response to problems with a child's CVGO spending, set limits on that spending and monitor it closely. A ban on a child's CVGO playing may be the only effective response to continued lack of spending control.

7.7 SCHOOL OFFICIALS, COUNSELLORS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

A. ASSESSMENT

It is recommended that school officals, counsellors and social workers:

1. Poll school or organization staff to ascertain whether others have experienced or received reports of problems at local CVGO's;

2. Attempt to establish whether tardiness, absence or other school problems have increased following the introduction of a CVGO near the school;

3. Visit any allegedly problematic CVGO, just prior to school hours, during the school day or following school hours, to determine if lateness, truancy or "early" self-dismissals may be related to CVGO availability, or if problematic activities are occurring there;

4. Contact local police or local licencing departments to see if there is any record of problems with a particular outlet.

B. ACTION

It is recommended that school officals, counsellors and social workers:

5. Convey any concerns or complaints directly to the relevant CVGO manager and request cooperation in alleviating problems. If that is not successful, local police or municipal officials should be contacted;

6. As visits to CVGO's provide an opportunity for "out of school" or "non-agency" contact, youth workers, in general, may choose to use such environments to enhance their relationships with particular youths or better understand their behaviour in non-structured social environments.

7.8 THE JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COMMITTEE: FURTHER RESEARCH ON GENERAL FACTORS IMPACTING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

A. Two of the most striking findings revealed in the background research for the project were the relative absence of information on youth congregation and young people's economic activity. (See 2.1). The "problem" of youth congregation was the concern most frequently mentioned by respondents in the study. The "potential" of youth congregations to lead to problems served as a justification for a major court decision supporting age restrictions at CVGO's. Yet, this investigator was able to find no serious or extensive research on youth congregation in general, nor on the "conditions" of youth congregation which are likely to lead to actual behaviour problems. It is clear that youth congregations are perceived as problems, but there is no systematic validation of their inevitable problematic quality, nor information on how to moderate such problems, other than discouragement or dispersal - which may be unnecessary or precipitate some of the very problems they are meant to avoid.

It is recommended that the J.C.P.P.:

1. Initiate research on the general issue of youth congregation, including:
    a) An extensive review of any extant literature on "types of congregations" - gathering places, "hang-outs", large social events and other community areas frequented by young people, as well as information on effective and ineffective responses to such congregations;

b) Interview those typically responsible for the management of youth congregation or who are often exposed to such gatherings, to ascertain their understanding of conditions which make such congregation problematic and the most/least effective means of responding to them;

c) Conduct observations, interviews and discussions with participants in different types of youth congregation to ascertain their reasons for gathering, their understanding of potential problems emanating from the congregations and their reaction to various community responses-intervention techniques to such gatherings.

d) Provide police, municipal officials and others responsible for youth congregation management with information and recommendations as to the responses with the greatest positive outcome potential.

B. The other widespread assumption revealed by the study was the notion that youths could not afford to play regularly without acquiring funds illegitimately. As playing is essentially a consumer behaviour, it seemed likely that the Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs or the recently implemented Consumer Education Courses in the schools would have information on young people's typical income acquisition and consumer behaviour. But this was not the case. Given that a significant proportion of delinquent activity involves "economic" crime, it would seem useful to determine what these patterns are, and how they might impact delinquent behaviour. Is it the case, for example, that youths who have jobs or the opportunity to earn money through home related work, are less likely to engage in theft or other delinquent activity?

Bylaw regulations of CVGO play focuses exclusively on reducing financial demands on young people, on the assumption that this would reduce theft activity. Perhaps it would be more reasonable to focus on enhancing possibilities for finance acquisition by young members of the community. Interviews with players suggest that most are willing to work, and a significant number already do, in order to get playing funds. Some adults may object to this expenditure, as being frivolous, but they can hardly object to the habit and experience of work which can or could result from these efforts. Working for playing funds is also likely to generate a mature respect for the money earned.

It is recommended that the J.C.P.P.:

2. Initiate research on the possible relationships between patterns of youth income/spending and deliquent activity, including:
    a) An examination of any relationship between amounts of legitimate income and delinquent activity;
    b) An examination of any relationship between patterns and types of spending (consumption items) and delinquent activity;
    c) An examination of any relationship between access to work or home-job income and delinquent activity;
    d) Provide consequent recommendations to municipal councils, school advisors, youth workers and parents regarding the possible deliquency preventative influence of "job" opportunities in the community or at home;
    e) Some integration with the Consumer Education Program in the schools, both for the purpose of gathering information and

providing work encouragement or support for young people, as well as attending to CVGO play as consumer behaviour.

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a) City of Vancouver
b) Western Amusement Machine Operators Association Model Bylaw
c) Saanich Bylaw 4833
d) Saanich Bylaw 3149
e) Saanich Bylaw 5062
f) New Westminster Bylaw 5137
g) Burnaby (Arcade Licencing Procedure)
h) City of Victoria

APPENDIX D-1 Resources Available

APPENDIX A-1

TABLE OF INFORMATION SOURCES, INFORMATION TYPES, RESEARCH TECHNIQUES AND SAMPLE SIZES

Information Source	Types of Information Gathered	Technique of Information Acquisiton	Approximate Sample Size
Academic and industry researchers	Background information; the state of the industry; data on players, arcades and delinquent activity.	Personal and phone interviews.	13
Operators/distributors/ manufacturers	Same as above.	Personal and phone interviews.	4
Industry magazine publishers	Same as above.	Phone interviews.	2
National industry organization representatives	Same as above.	Phone interviews.	2
Police officials	Statistics, studies, experience, perceptions of CVGO's in their community.	Personal and phone interviews.	50
Municipal hall officials	Community perceptions and responses to CVGO's, including by-law activity.	Personal and phone interviews.	54
Young players	General CVGO activity, money money acquisition and spending habits, attitudes towards CVGO's.	Participant and non-participant observation.	100
Parents	Perception of CVGO's, knowledge of child's income sources and CVGO spending habits.	Telephone and personal interviews, meeting attendance, questionnaires.	70

Information Source	Types of Information Gathered	Technique of Information Acquisition	Approximate Sample Size
School Board Officials	Perceptions of CVGO's as related to school activity and children's behaviour.	Phone interviews.	6
School administrators and Counsellors	Same as above.	Phone and personal interviews.	30
Arcade managers/operators	General information about CVGO activity, police contacts, client types and spending habits.	Personal interviews and direct observation.	35
P.C.C.'s, single parent groups, Tough Love, B.C. Foster Parents Association	Perceived problems concerning children in relation to CVGO's including income and spending habits.	Personal interviews, meeting attendance, questionnaires.	5 groups directly, 15 Foster Parent Group representatives (questionnaire was sent to 90 provincial groups).
Municipal Council and Social Service agency meetings	Community perceptions of and responses to CVGO's.	Participant and non-participant observation.	4
CVGO contiguous residents, merchants and mall managers	Perceptions of CVGO influence on business, information and perceptions regarding CVGO affiliated youth activity.	Personal interviews and direct observation	50
Social and government agency workers and administrators	Background information, community perceptions of CVGO's.	Personal and phone interviews.	25
CVGO's—both arcades and outlets of less than four units.	Information on CVGO-related activities, players and environments.	Interviews and participant and non-participant observation.	50

APPENDIX A-2

QUESTIONS FOR VARIOUS RESPONDENTS

I. Questions for Youths

1. How frequently do you play?

2. How long do you play?

3. How much do you spend?

4. Where do you get the money?

5. Have you had any problems as a result of playing
    a) in the arcade?
    b) around the arcade?
    c) with parents?
    d) with school?

6. Have you come into contact with the police?

7. What to you think about the community response to the arcades?

8. Do any kids get into trouble because of being at the arcades?
    a) What kind of trouble?
    b) Could anything be done to prevent this?

9. Do you spend time with people you otherwise wouldn't as a result of your arcade play?
    a) Does this led you to do things you wouldn't otherwise do?

10. What would you do if you weren't playing at the arcade?

11. What else is available in your community other than the arcades?

12. Do you have video games at home?

II. Questions for Police

1. Do CVGO'S present any problem for the community?

2. What is it?

3. How did it come to your attention?

4. a) Is there any hard evidence of the problem?
    b) Is it just a change of location for an old problem?

5. How are you responding?
    a) relevant by-laws
    b) change in by-laws
    c) enforcement efforts
    d) opinion of conformity

6. What accounts for some outlets being problematic and others not?

7. Is there any evidence that association with CVGO's causes criminal activity? Or that it provides opportunities/motivation for criminal activity?

8. Have there been/are there still other "hangouts" in the community which present the same problems as the CVGO's?

III. Questions for municipal officials (managers, clerks, solicitors, planners)

1. a) Do you have any by-laws which are applicable to the regulations of CVGO's?
    b) Considering any?

2. a) When were they enacted?
    b) Why were they enacted?

3. Describe the by-law.

4. a) Has the by-law been effective?
    b) If not, what would you recommend?

5. a) How many CVGO's are in your community?
    b) What are their locations?
    c) If you don't have this information, do you know where it might be found?

6. a) Are you considering limiting the number of CVGO's in your community?
    b) How?

7. What differentiates troublesome CVGO's from those that are not?

8. a) Where did kids hang out before the arrival of CVGO's?
    b) Are the problems there any different?

IV. Questions for School Board, Counsellors, Youth Workers

1. Do CVGO's present any problem in your community?

2. a) What is it?
    b) What is evidence of this problem?

3. Do they have any impact on school attendance/participation?
4. Do "problem kids" tend to hang out at arcades?
5. Have any "previously non-problematic" kids gotten into trouble as a result of hanging out at arcades?
6. Do you have any recommendations regarding regulations at CVGO's?
7. a) Where did kids hang out prior to CVGO's?
   b) Were the problems there any different?

V. Questions for Parents

1. Age of your child?
2. Sex of your child?
3. Your occupation?
4. How frequently does your child attend a video arcade per week?
5. How much money does your child spend on video games per week?
6. What is the total amount your child has to spend per week?
7. What are the sources of your child's spending money? (i.e. allowance, work, savings).
8. Does your child's participation at video arcades produce any particular problems? If so, please describe briefly.
9. Have you ever visited a video arcade with your child? If so, what was your impression?
10. Do you have a video game at home?
11. Do you have any other comments regarding children's participation at video outlets?

VI. Questions for Merchants or Residents near CVGO's

1. What is it like having video game outlets nearby?
2. Does it produce any problems for you?
3. What are they?
4. What have you done about it?

VII. Questions for Arcade and other Outlet Managers

1. Does having young players present any problem for you?
2. What kinds of problems?
3. Have you received any complaints? Who from?
4. Do you have any idea of the average amount players spend?
5. How does this vary by age?
6. What is the most you have ever seen a young person spend in one session?
7. Do you have many police contacts?
8. Do you have a group of regular players?
9. When are your busiest periods?
10. How much do your machines earn per week?
11. What kinds of "house rules" do you have?

APPENDIX A-3

PARENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Age of your child ______

2. Sex of your child ______

3. Your occupation ______

4. How frequently does your child attend a video arcade ______ /week.

5. How much money does your child spend on video games ______ /week.

6. What is the total amount your child has to spend ______ /week.

7. What are the sources of your child's spending money? (i.e. allowance, work, savings) ______________________________

8. Does your child's participation at video arcades produce any particular problems? ______

   If so, please describe briefly. ______________________________

   ____

   ____

9. Have you ever visited a video arcade with your child? ______________

   If so, what was your impression? ______________________________

   ____

   ____

10. Do you have a video game at home? ______________________________

11. Do you have any other comments regarding children's participation at video outlets?

   ____

   ____

   ____

12. If you are interested in discussing these matters further, please provide your phone number and a time when it would be convenient to call you.

   ____

Thank you for your cooperation.

____

Parent's Name

APPENDIX B-1

TABLE OF COMMUNITIES SURVEYED

RE: NUMBERS OF OULETS, PERCEPTION OF CVGO PROBLEMS, REGULATORY ACTIONS

Municipality	Number of Arcades	Number of Other Outlets	Arcade Specific Bylaws	Other Relevant Bylaws	Police Contacts	Complaints and Complainants
Cities:						
Armstrong	0	1	No	Business		No Complaints
Castlegar	1	0	No	Business	X	Old arcade relocated: no problems now; police report rumours of drugs, noise complaints
Courtenay	0	2	Yes	Zoned	X	Several arcades closed, merchant complaints; no problems now; rumours of drugs
Cranbrook	3	0	Pending		X	Merchant complaints; drugs suspected in one location; no problems in mall locations
Duncan	4	0	Considered		X	Residents and merchants complain of loitering; problems reduced through voluntary cooperation; police assume some stealing from home
Dawson Creek	6	NI**	Proposed			No complaints
Enderby	1	1	No	Pool hall		Some initial complaints but no problems now

Municipality	Number of Arcades	Number of Other Outlets	Arcade Specific Bylaws	Other Relevant Bylaws	Police Contacts	Complaints and Complainants
Fernie	1	3	No	Zoning	X	Some "hanging out", littering complaints; assume some B&E money going to outlets
Fort St. John	3	3				No initial problems regarding late hours, involvement of school children; solved through informal cooperation, standardized rules
Grandforks	1	2	No	Reviewing		No serious problems
Greenwood	0	1	No	Pool room		No complaints
Sidney	1	NI	Yes	Business		Police concerns regarding loitering and littering, nearby vandalism and assumed drug contacts
Kamloops	8	NI	Deleted		X	Only one arcade - closing (reduced age limits)
Kelowna	3	Few	Yes	Zoning	X	Parent complaints of "addiction"; problems resolved through informal meetings.
Kimberly	1	NI	Consider			A few merchant complaints regarding littering; want arcade out of mall.
Kitimat	2	NI	No			A few merchant complaints - late hours solved through informal cooperation
Merrit	1	1	No			Some problems with vandalism solved by increased police and private security

Municipality	Number of Arcades	Number of Other Outlets	Arcade Specific Bylaws	Other Relevant Bylaws	Police Contacts	Complaints and Complainants
Nanaimo	6	NI	Yes	Business	X	Complaints regarding late hours; solved by moving arcades to malls
Nelson	3	NI	Proposed	Pool room	X	Heavy negative media coverage: council meetings assume some stealing from home and "hanging out"
North Van*	4	18	Pending	Business	X	Few complaints but police aware of drugs and B&E association
Penticton	2	NI	Proposed			Initial parent complaints; solved through informal cooperation
Port Alberni	NI	NI	Yes	Business		Minimal: no police concern
Port Coquitlam	2	NI	No	Business	X	Some resident complaints; one arcade assume some drugs
Port Moody	2	NI	Proposed		X	Council wants restrictions during school hours; good informal cooperation with manager; no major problems
Prince Rupert	3	NI	Proposed		X	No serious problems; operators oppose machine number limitations
Prince George	6	NI	Yes	Zoning	X	Multiple, including "hanging out", drug "haven", stolen property exchange, harassment
Quesnel	3	NI	No	Business	X	Few minor complaints
Terrace	2	1	No		X	Problems at one located near beer parlour

Municipality	Number of Arcades	Number of Other Outlets	Arcade Specific Bylaws	Other Relevant Bylaws	Police Contacts	Complaints and Complainants
Trail	3	NI	No	Business		No major complaints now; past problem with one whose manager who is now gone. Some parking meters broken into
Revelstoke	1	2	No	Pool Room revoked	X	No major problems; rumoured rash of break-ins
Rossland	1	0	No	Business		No problems; good management
Vancouver*	6	Many	Yes	Zoning & Business	X	Complaints from businessmen and shoppers, several neighbourhoods have rejected CVGO's; some scattered school complaints; police active in opposition
Vernon	3	0	Rejected	Business	X	Parking meter break-ins; "hanging out"; harassment; assume some drug traffic
Victoria*	0	40	Yes	Business	X	Minimal; dispersion effective
White Rock	0	NI	Yes	Zoning &	X	Concerns regarding children spending too much; truancy; police Businessoppose arcades
Williams Lake	2	0	No, pool room revoked	Business		No problems

Municipality	Number of Arcades	Number of Other Oultets	Arcade Specific Bylaws	Other Relevant Bylaws	Police Contacts	Complaints and Complainants
Towns:						
Comox	2	NI	No	Business	X	A few initial complaints; including stealing from home; no problems now
Creston	2	2	No	Business	X	Had games in high school but parent's complaints led to removal
Golden	1	1	No	Zoning	X	Only at opening; no problems now
Hope	0	2	No	Pool Room	X	No serious problems; operators want age 15 limit revoked
Ladysmith	0	2	Rejected	Business	X	Nothing serious; no recent complaints; suspicion of soft drug use
Parksville	2	NI	No	Business		Some merchants complaints; town political issue; media attention but problem is just a few kids
Princeton	1	0	No	Zoned		No problems anticipated
Port McNeil	0	1	No	Business		No complaints now; one shut-down earlier
Smithers	1	0	No	Business		Many complaints: all proved unsubstantial

Municipality	Number of Arcades	Number of Other Outlets	Arcade Specific Bylaws	Other Relevant Bylaws	Police Contacts	Complaints and Complainants
Districts:						
Abbotsford	NI	NI	Yes	Business		A few complaints; no major problems
Burnaby*	16	NI	Yes	Business	X	A few complaints, some from schools, regarding truancy, lateness
North Van*	0	12(est)	Yes and Pending	Zoning	X	Few complaints, some from schools; "hanging out"
Richmond*	6	NI	Pending	Zoning	X	Merchant complaints about one arcade - including "hanging out"; vandalism; police concern over drug sales
Saanich*	7	10	Yes	Business	X	A few individual complaints; major school/parent concern about near school locations
Salmon Arm	0	Few	Pool Room	Business Pool room		
Surrey*	6	NI	Yes	Business Zoning	X	Police concern regarding "hanging out"; drug transactions; police impression of B&E links

Municipality	Number of Arcades	Number of Other Outlets	Arcade Specific Bylaws	Other Relevant Bylaws	Police Contacts	Complaints and Complainants
Regional Districts:						
Capital*	6	NI	Pending	No "Laws Patent"	X	Strong police concern and opposition; assume B&E, drug connections; bad"types" "hanging out"
Village:						
Cache Creek	1	1	No			Few: basically concerns about "hanging out"

Note: *Indicates community CVGO's visited and police, municipal officers, merchants interviewed
** No information

APPENDIX C - RELEVANT PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL BYLAWS

C-1 Provincial

- (a) RSC 375 - S. 113-(1)
- (b) RSC 290 - S. 931-(1)-(b)
- (c) RSC 290 - S. 932-(c)
- (d) RSC 290 - S. 513-(1) + (e)

C-2 Selected CVGO Specific Muncipal Bylaw Options

- (a) Vancouver - 5570
- (b) Model Bylaw
- (c) Saanich Bylaw 4833
- (d) Saanich Bylaw 3149
- (e) Saanich Bylaw 5062
- (f) New Westminster Bylaw 5137
- (g) Burnaby (Arcade Licencing Procedure)
- (h) Victoria - Bylaw 81-100

APPENDIX C

C-1 Revised Statutes of British Columbia - 1979

C1(a) Cumpulsory Attendance

RSC 375 S.113.

(1) Subject to the exemptions under subsection (2), every child over the age of 7 years and under the age of 15 years shall attend some public school during the regular school hours every school day, and every parent or guardian who fails or neglects to cause such a child under his care to attend some public school during the regular school hours every school day commits an offense and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding $10, and each day's continuance of this failure or neglect shall constitute a separate offence.

C1(b) Curfew Bylaw

RSC 290-931.

(1) The council may by bylaw provide for the regulation of the time during each day during which children shall not be on the streets without proper guardianship, and the age, or apparent age, under which they shall be required to be in their homes at the hour appointed; and children so required to be in their homes or off the streets shall not be on the public streets, except under proper control or guardianship or for some unavoidable cause.

(2) Any child so found after the time appointed shall be liable to be warned by a peace officer to go home and if after the warning the child is found loitering on a street, he may be taken by the peace officer to his home.

(3) A parent or guardian who permits his child or ward habitually to contravene a bylaw adopted under this section commits an offense and is liable, on conviction, to a fine not exceeding $5.

C1(c) Nuisances and Disturbances

RSC 290 S.932

The council may by bylaw
(c) regulate or prohibit the making or causing of noises or sounds in or on a highway or elsewhere in the municipality which disturb, or tend to disturb, the quiet, peace, rest, enjoyment, comfort or convenience of the neighbourhood, or of persons in the vicinity, or which the the council believes are objectionable or liable to disturb the quiet, peace, rest, enjoyment, comfort or convenience of individuals or the public, and may make

different regulations or prohibitions for different areas of the muncipality.

C1(d) Powers for licence inspector, and licence suspensions and appeals

RSC 290 S.513

(1) The council may by bylaw delegate to any official designated in the bylaw power to grant a licence where he is satisfied that the applicant has complied with the bylaws of the muncipality regulating building, zoning, health, sanitation and business, and may also delegate to that official the power to suspend any licence for the period he decides if its holder

(e) has, in the opinion of the official, conducted his business in a manner, performed a service in a manner, or sold, offered for sale, displayed for sale or distributed to a person actually or apparently under the age of 16 years any thing, that may be harmful or dangerous to the health or safety of a person actually or apparently under the age of 16 years.

C-2 Selected CVGO Specific Municipal Bylaw Options

C-2(a)

BY-LAW NO. 5570

A By-Law to amend the License By-law,
being By-law No. 4450

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. Section 2 of By-law No. 4450 as amended to the date hereof is amended by repealing the definition of arcade and substituting therefore the following:

> "arcade" means any premises containing four or more machines on which mechanical, electrical, automatic or computerized games are played for amusement or entertainment and for which a coin or token must be inserted or a fee is charged for use.

2. Section 17 of By-law No. 4450 as amended to the date hereof is repealed and the following is substituted therefore:

> "17. No person carrying on the business of an arcade or shooting gallery shall permit any machine on which mechanical, electrical, automatic or computerized games are played and for which a coin or token must be inserted or a fee is charged for use to be operated, or any customer, person or onlooker to remain in such arcade or shooting gallery, or any place where such a machine as aforesaid is operated, between the hours of twelve o'clock midnight and the hour of six o'clock in the following morning; and no such person shall permit any person under the age of eighteen years to enter or remain at any time in any room in which any such machine is kept."

3. By-law No. 4450 as amended to the date hereof is amended by adding thereto as section 16A the following:

GAMES ROOM

16A (1) The provisions of this section apply to all persons carrying on any business except that of an arcade or shooting gallery.

(2) For the purposes of this section, an "amusement machine" is a machine on which a mechanical, electrical, automatic or computerized game is played and for which a coin or token must be inserted or a fee is charged for use.

(3) Any person who keeps three or less amusement machines is, for the purpose of this section, the operator of a "games room" and the premises in which such machines are kept is, for the purposes of this section, a "games room".

(4) (a) No person shall be the operator of a games room unless he is nineteen years of age. No operator of a games room shall employ any person to work in a games room who is under nineteen years of age.

(b) This subsection does not apply to a person working in a business premises containing both amusement machines and any other unrelated business so long as the person's duties do not include supervising the operation of the amusement machines or providing services to users of the machines.

(5) No operator of a games room shall permit an amusement machine to be played, used or operated between the hours of 10:00 o'clock in the afternoon (10:00 p.m.) and 10 o'clock in the morning (10:00 a.m.) of the following day from Sunday to Thursday or between the hours of 11:30 in the afternoon (11:30 p.m.) and 10:00 o'clock in the morning (10:00 a.m.) of the following day on Fridays or Saturdays. An operator of a games room shall be deemed to permit such play, operation or use if it occurs while he or an employee of his is present on the premises.

(6) No operator of a games room shall permit any person apparently or actually under the age of fifteen years to use, play or otherwise operate an amusement machine or loiter about an amusement machine between the hours of 10:00 o'clock in the morning (10:00 a.m.) and 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon (3:00 p.m.) on Mondays to Fridays inclusive or after 9:00 o'clock in the afternoon (9:00 p.m.) on Sundays to Thursdays inclusive, unless such a day is a weekday and a school holiday. An operator of a games room shall be deemed to permit such use, play or operation if it occurs while he or an employee of his is present on the premises.

(7) Where reasonable doubt exists as to the age of a person desiring to play an amusement machine, the operator or person having responsibility for the asmusement machine shall not permit any person who is unable to provide documented proof of age to play an amusement machine.

(8) No operator of a games room shall allow any intoxicated person on the premises or allow any person on the premises to drink alcoholic beverages or take drugs or take part in any gambling, swearing or use of offensive language, or fight, or create any kind of disturbance; no operator of a games room shall do anything or neglect to do anything that may cause the games room to become a place of vice, drunkeness, profane swearing, or indecent, obscene, blasphemous or grossly insulting language, or other immorality and indeceny.

(9) Every operator of a games room shall keep the premises well lit and clean and shall not cover up any windows in an manner so as to prevent a clear view of the interior of the premises.

(10) Every operator of a games room shall post in a conspicuous place, near the amusement machines, a summary of the rules of conduct for customers, including those rules contained in this bylaw.

(11) The provisions of this by-law shall not apply to an establishment licensed under the Liquor Control and Licensing Act."

4. Subsection 4 of Section 30 of By-law No. 4450 as amended to the date hereof is repealed and the following substituted therefore:

> "(4) Notwithstanding subsection 2, every person who commmits an offence against section 16A is liable to a fine and penalty of not less than $250 and every person who commits an offence against section 17A is liable to a fine and penalty of not less than $100."

5. This by-law comes into force and takes effect on the date of its passing.

DONE AND PASSED in open Council this 10th day of August, 1982.

(signed) Ald. B. Yorke

Deputy Mayor

(signed) M. Kinsella

Deputy City Clerk

"I hereby certify that the foregoing is a correct copy of a By-law passed by the Council of the City of Vancouver on the 10th day of August, 1982, and numbered 5570.

DEPUTY CITY CLERK"

C-2(b) Western Amusement Machine Operators Association

MODEL BYLAW

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF

____

TO REGULATE AN AUTOMATIC AMUSEMENT DEVICES AND AMUSEMENT ARCADES

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
____ AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Declaration of Legislative Intent

It is, the intent of the City Council to reasonably regulate the use and play of automatic amusement devices through the licensing procedure set forth below.

SECTION 2. Definition

The following word used herein shall have the meaning set forth:

1. An automatic Amusement Device -
   is any machine (excluding juke boxes), which, upon insertion of a coin, slug, or token in any slot or receptacle in the machine or attached thereto, operates for use as a game, contest, or amusement through the exercise of skill without any tangible reward or return.
2. Amusement Arcade -
   is any business establishment with four (4) or more automatic devices upon its premises and which allows said automatic amusement devices to be operated thereon for use in games, contests, or amusement through the exercise of skill.
3. Licensing Authority -
   is the officer or agency of the City of ____________________
   duly designed by ordinance of the City of ____________________
   to license amusement arcades, to inspect pursuant to the limitations established under the Municipal Act any business premises within the city limits of the City of ____________________
   for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with the terms of this ordinance, and, upon notice and a hearing pursuant to Section 7 of this ordinance, deny, suspend or revoke the license of any amusement arcade in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance.
4. License -
   as used in this ordinance means a grant of authority from the City of
   ____
   to operate an amusement arcade upon the premises described in the license.
5. Licensee -
   is any person, including any corporation, holding a license pursuant to the terms of this ordinance.

6. Applicant -
is any person, including any corporation, which has submitted an application for a license pursuant to Section 4 of this ordinance.

SECTION 3. License Required

It shall be unlawful to establish or operate an Amusement Arcade within the City of ______________________ without first obtaining a license for an Amusement Arcade from the licensing authority for the City of ______________________.

SECTION 4. Application

All persons seeking a license shall submit an application to the licensing authority. Said application shall be submitted in writing upon a form furnished to the applicant by the licensing authority. Upon said application the applicant shall furnish to the licensing authority the following information: The names and addresses of all person, including corporations, in whose name the application is submitted, the address of the location for which applicant seeks a license, the number and type of automatic amusement devices applicant proposes to be maintained at said location, the criminal felony conviction record of the applicant, or its officers, if applicant is a corporation, if any, and, if the applicant does bear a conviction record of a criminal felony or felonies, any information which applicant believes would show that the applicant has been rehabilitated. Within not more than forty-five days of receipt of such application, the licensing authority shall grant a license or order a hearing as herein after provided. If the licensing authority fails to either grant a license or order a hearing within forty-five days of receipt of the application, the license shall be deemed granted.

SECTION 5. Regulations

1. All automatic amusement devices within the premises shall be visible to, and under the supervision of, a person or persons of adult age, at least one of whom shall be present at all times when an automatic amusement device is being operated.

2. During the regular school year (excluding therefrom, summer school), excepting weekends or legal holidays, persons under the age of sixteen years (or the maximum legal age for mandatory school attendance) shall not be allowed to operate automatic amusement devices Monday through Friday, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. unless accompanied by a parent or authorized guardian.

3. No persons under the age of sixteen years (or whatever age limitation is set forth in the preceeding paragraph) shall be allowed to enter or remain inside an automatic amusement arcade after the time for curfew for persons that age that has been established by ordinance of this City of ______________________ (presuming such curfew exists).

4. Where necessary, outside security lighting shall be provided under the direction and upon the recommendation of the licensing authority and/or Police Department.

5. The license shall be for a period of one year, and shall be automatically renewed from year to year thereafter. The license may be revoked or suspended for the reasons stated in Section 6.

SECTION 6. Denial, Revocation or Suspension of License

A license may be denied, revoked or suspended for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Willfull violation of any provision of Section 5 of this ordinance;
2. Conviction of any person seeking or holding a license of a felony under any provincial or federal law if the licensing authority determines that such person has not been sufficiently rehabilitated to warrant the public trust.

SECTION 7. Revocation, Suspension and/or Denial Procedure

If the licensing authority shall find probable cause that a licensee or applicant has violated the provisions of Section 6 of this ordinance, the licensing authority shall give written notice thereof by certified mail addressed to the licensee of applicant. Said notice shall specify the alleged grounds of said violation and shall inform the recipient of his or her right to demand a hearing before an objective and independent hearing officer designated for such purpose by the licensing authority. Upon receipt of such a notice the licensee or applicant shall have the right to demand a hearing. Such demand shall be made in writing to the licensing authority no later than the tenth (10th) day next succeeding the date of mailing of the aforesaid notice by the licensing authority. If no demand for hearing is made within said time, the license shall forthwith be revoked, suspended or denied. If a hearing is demanded, it shall be held within ten (10) days thereafter, upon written notice to the party demanding the hearing. The licensing authority shall determine the procedure to be utilized at such hearings, and shall authorize the hearing officer to hear testimony under oath and receive all evidence germane to the issues, and to make findings of fact and conclusions of law. The hearing officer shall have the power to order that any licensing authority shall enforce the provisions of the order of the hearing officer. The licensee, applicant and authority may appeal from any final order of the hearing officer pursuant to (common law writ of certioari or) the applicable provisions of law providing for judicial review of administrative determinations of this city.

SECTION 8. Penalties

Any licensee who, after notice and hearing in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance, is found by a hearing officer to have will fully violated any provision of Section 6 of this ordinance, shall be subject to the following penalties upon order of said hearing officer:

A. For any first violation, a suspension of license for any period of time not to exceed 30 days in duration;
B. For any second violation a suspension of license for any period of time not to exceed 90 days in duration;

C. For any third violation or more, either a suspension of license for any period of time not to exceed 120 days in duration, or a revocation of the license.

These penalties shall be enforced by the licensing authority.

SECTION 9. Churches, Hospitals, Schools - Amusement Arcade

No amusement arcade located within five hundred (500) feet of any church, hospital, grammar or secondary school shall receive a license pursuant to this ordinance unless such amusement arcade was so located prior to the enactment of this ordinance. Provided, however, that any amusement arcade so located prior to enactment of this ordinance shall not receive a license pursuant to this ordinance if at any time following the enactment of this ordinance the automatic amusement devices located on the premises of such amusement arcade are removed for any purpose other then replacement thereof. (replacement may be defined as the substitution of existing machines by similar within a 72 hour period).

SECTION 10. License Fee

The licensing authority shall be empowered to collect with any application for license hereunder any reasonable fee established by ordinance of the City of ________________________________.

SECTION 11. License Fee - No Preemption

This ordinance shall not preempt any reasonable fee which this city may levy under separate ordinance upon automatic amusement devices.

SECTION 12. Severability

If any provision of this ordinance shall be declared invalid by a court having jurisdiction, said judgment shall not be deemed to invalidate any other provisions of this ordinance, all of which shall remain valid and enforceable.

(Draft prepared by Western AMOA for discussion purposes only).

C-2C

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF SAANICH

BY-LAW NO. 4833

A BY - LAW

TO REGULATE THE OPERATION OF GAMES ROOMS AND AMUSEMENT MACHINES

WHEREAS the Council may pursuant to Section 526 of the Municipal Act, by by-law, regulate the carrying on of business in the Municipality for the purpose of protecting the public or preventing or minimizing nuisances;

AND WHEREAS it is deemed necessary to regulate the operation of games rooms and amusement machines;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the District of Saanich in open meeting assembled enacts as follows:

1. INTERPRETATION

"Amusement Machine" means a machine on which mechanical, electrical, automatic or computerized games are played for amusement or entertainment and for which a coin or token must be inserted or a fee charged for use.

"Games Room" means any room, building, store or other physically segregated area open to the public containing one or more amusement machines.

"Operator" means any person who as a proprietor, lessee, manager, employee or otherwise carries on the business of operating a games room.

"School Holiday" means any day which is a school holiday for schools in the Greater Victoria School District No. 61 or Saanich School District No. 63.

2. MINIMUM AGE OF OPERATOR

(a) No person shall operate, manage or be employed in a games room who is under the age of 19 years.

(b) This section does not apply to a person working in business premises containing both amusement machines and any other unrelated business so long as the person's duties do not include supervising the operation of the amusement machines or providing services to users of the machines.

3. HOURS OF OPERATION

No person who owns, operates or is employed in a games room shall permit an amusement machine to be played, used or operated between the hours of 10 o'clock in the afternoon (10:00 p.m.) and 10 o'clock in the morning (10:00 a.m.) of the following day from Sunday to Thursday or between the hours of 11:30 in the afternoon (11:30 p.m.) and 10:00 in the morning (10:00 a.m.) of the following day on Fridays or Saturdays.

4. MINIMUM AGE

No person apparently or actually under the age of fifteen years shall use, play or otherwise operate an amusement machine in a games room or loiter about an amusement machine in a games room between the hours of 10 o'clock in the morning (10:00 a.m.) and 3 o'clock in the afternoon (3:00 p.m.) Mondays to Fridays inclusive, or after 9 o'clock in the afternoon (9:00 p.m.) on Sundays to Thursdays inclusive, unless such day is a weekday and a school holiday.

5. No operator of a games room shall permit any person apparently or actually under the age of fifteen years to use, play or otherwise operate an amusement machine or loiter about an amusement machine between the hours of 10 o'clock in the morning (10:00 a.m.) and 3 o'clock in the afternoon (3:00 p.m.) on Mondays to Fridays inclusive or after 9 o'clock in the afternoon (9:00 p.m.) on Sundays to Thursdays inclusive, unless such a day is a weekday and on a school holiday.

6. Where reasonable doubt exists as to the age of a person desiring to play an amusement machine, the operator or person having responsibility for the amusement machine shall not permit any person who is unable to provide documented proof of age to play an amusement machine.

7. DISORDERLY CONDUCT

No operator of a games room shall allow any intoxicated person on the premises or allow any person on the premises to drink alcoholic beverages or take drugs or take part in any gambling, swearing or use of offensive language, or fight, or create any kind of disturbance; no operator of a games room shall do anything or neglect to do anything that may cause the games room to become a place of vice, drunkeness, profane swearing, or indecent, obscene, blasphmemous or grossly insulting language, or other immorality and indecency.

8. No person in an intoxicated condition shall enter or remain in a games room; no person shall drink alcoholic beverages, take drugs, take part in gambling, swear or use offensive language, fight or create any kind of disturbance in a games room.

9. Every operator of a games room shall keep the premises well lit and clean and shall not cover up any windows in a manner so as to prevent a clear view of the interior of the premises.

10. POSTING RULES

Every operator of a games room shall post in a conspicuous place, near the amusement machines, a summary of the rules of conduct for customers including those rules contained in this by-law.

11. ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

A Peace Officer, the Development Manager, the Licence Inspector and any person acting under the authority of the Development Manager or Licence Inspector are hereby authorized to enter at all reasonable times upon any property to ascertain whether the provisions of this by-law are being observed.

12. EXEMPTION

The provisions of this by-law shall not apply to an establishment licensed under the Liquor Control and Licensing Act.

13. SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS LICENCE

In addition to any other penalties, any operator of a games room or any person holding a Business Licence for business premises in which an amusement machine is located, shall, upon conviction of an offence against this by-law, be liable to have his Business Licence suspended pursuant to Section 513 of the Municipal Act.

14. PENALTY

Any person who violates any provision of this by-law or who suffers or permits any act or thing to be done in contravention of any of the provisions of this by-law, or neglects to do or refrains from doing anything required to be done by any of the provisions of this by-law, is guilty of an offence and shall be liable upon summary conviction therefore to a penalty not exceeding $1,000.00 and to imprisonment to a term not exceeding six months.

15. This by-law may be cited for all purposes as the "AMUSEMENT MACHINE AND GAMES ROOM REGULATION BY-LAW, 1982, NO. 4833."

Read a first time this 2nd day of February, 1982.

Read a second time this 2nd day of February, 1982.

Read a third time this 2nd day of February, 1982.

Reconsidered, finally passed and adopted, signed by the Mayor and the Clerk and sealed with the Seal of the Corporation of the 9th day of February, 1982.

Clerk of the Corporation of
The District of Saanich

Mayor

C-2(d)

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF SAANICH

BY-LAW NO.

A BY - LAW

TO AMEND BY-LAW NO. 3149, BEING THE "BUSINESS LICENCE BY-LAW, 1970"

The Council of The Corporation of the District of Saanich in open meeting assembled enacts as follows:

1. By-law No. 3149, being the "BUSINESS LICENCE BY-LAW, 1970" is hereby amended by adding the following to Schedule "A":

   "4.1 Arcade

   The business of an arcade or games room or the installation of amusement machines, as defined in the "AMUSEMENT MACHINE AND GAMES ROOM REGULATION BY-LAW, 1982, NO. ", in an existing licensed business establishment, a fee of $50.00 per amusement machine; in the case of the installation of amusement machines in an establishment containing another type of business, such fee shall be in addition to any other fees payable in respect of such business.

2. This By-law may be cited for all purposes as the "BUSINESS LICENCE BY-LAW, 1970, NO. 3149, AMENDMENT BY-LAW, 1982, No.

Read a first time this

Read a second time this

Read a third time this

Reconsidered, finally passed and adopted, signed by the Mayor and the Clerk and sealed with the seal of the Corporation on the

____
Clerk of the Corporation of
the District of Saanich

____
Mayor

C-2(e)

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF SAANICH

BY-LAW NO. 5062

A BY - LAW

TO PROHIBIT THE OPERATION OF GAMES ROOMS IN THE VICINITY OF SCHOOLS

WHEREAS the Council may pursuant to Section 527 of the Municipal Act, by by-law, prohibit the operation of a place of amusement for all or defined parts of the Municipality;

AND WHEREAS the Council considers the location of a games room next to or in the vicinity of a school to be a nuisance and to pose a danger to the welfare of school children in the Municipality;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council in open meeting assembled enacts as follows:

1. By-Law No. 4833 being the "AMUSEMENT MACHINE AND GAMES ROOM REGULATION BY-LAW, 1982", is hereby amended as follows:

   (a) By inserting in Section 1 the following definition immediately after the definition of "Operator",

   "School" means a public school as defined in the School Act, 1979 c.375 or an independent school as defined in the School Support (Independent) Act, 1979 c.378.

   (b) By inserting the following as a new section immediately after Section 12:

   "12.1 PROHIBITION

   (a) No person shall operate a games room any part of which is located within 250 meters of a lot line of a lot on which there is a school or which is part of the grounds surrounding a school.

   (b) No business licence shall be granted for the operation of a games room which would contravene sub-section (a).

   (c) Any games room being lawfully operated on the date of the adoption of this by-law which contravenes sub-section (a) may be continued notwithstanding the provisions of this section but if the operation is discontinued for a period of 30 days it shall become subject to the provisions of this section."

2. This by-law may be cited for all purposes as the "AMUSEMENT MACHINE AND GAMES ROOM REGULATION BY-LAW, 1982, Amendment By-law, 1983, No. 5062 ".

Read a first time this 7th day of March, 1983.
Read a second time this 7th day of March, 1983.
Read a third time this 7th day of March, 1983.

Reconsidered, finally passed and adopted, signed by the Mayor and the Clerk and sealed with the Seal of the Corporation on the 14th day of March, 1983.

Clerk of the Corporation of
The District of Saanich

Mayor

C-2(f)

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NEW WESTMINSTER

BY LAW NO. 5137, 1979

A By-law to restrict the hours of operation and the age limits of patrons of amusement centres

WHEREAS Section 458M of the Municipal Act R.S.B.C. 1960, c. 255 empowers Council by by-law to regulate the carrying on of business within the municipality for the purpose of protecting the public or preventing or minimizing nuisances and misleading practices, such regulations being allowed to be different for different classes of business;

AND WHEREAS the Council deems it necessary and advisable to protect the public and to prevent or minimize nuisances to restrict the hours of operation and the age of patrons of the class of business known as amusement centres;

NOW THEREFORE the City Council of the Corporation of the City of New Westminister in open meeting assembled ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. This By-law shall be cited as Business Licence Amendment (Age & Hour Restrictions) By-law No. 5137, 1979.

2. Business Licence By-law No. 5036, 1977 is hereby amended by the addition of the following:

"AMUSEMENT CENTRES

1(A) Businesses within the classification identified in Schedule "A" to this By-law as amusement centres shall:

(a) not be open for business earlier than 10:00 a.m. in the morning (1000h) or later than 10:00 p.m. in the evening (2200h) local time;

(b) not allow any person under the age of SEVENTEEN (17) years on their premises as a patron.'

GIVEN THREE READINGS this 9th day of April A.D. 1979

RECONSIDERED and FINALLY PASSED and ADOPTED and the seal of The Corporation of the City of New Westminster affixed this 23rd day of April, A.D. 1979.

(by-law signed by Mayor and City Clerk)

C-2(g)

BURNABY

ARCADES - LICENCING PROCEDURE

1. An arcade licence is required when the number of game machines exceedes 5, or when any number of machines is located within an enclosed area such as a games room.

2. Zoning: C3 or C4.

3. Offstreet parking - one space for each 5 machines. Located on premises for exclusive use of arcade operator. Alternately, may contract for offstreet offsite parking located within 400 feet and confirmed with a contract filed with the Planning Department. Emphasis: prospective operators should be directed to look at their parking as one of the main components in qualifying a location for licence.

4. Preliminary plan approval: Direct applicants to Planning Department for application and processing of PPA. Advise that parking arrangements must be shown on application.

5. Public assembly status: Applicants must be directed to the Provincial Fire Marshall's Office, Vancouver, for the purpose of having building rated as a public assembly facility.

6. Fire Department: Final approval for licence by Fire Department will be forthcoming when applicant has achieved compliance with Provincial Fire Marshall regarding public assembly status and general fire regulations.

7. Health Department: Approval by Health Department regarding sanitary facilities. Additional involvement if applicant intends to operate a snack bar or food service requiring a Provincial food handler's permit.

8. Building Department: Permits necessary to cover all interior alterations including changes to mechanical spects of building, i.e. electrical wiring to accommodate machines.

9. Licence application: Referred to previous mentioned departments and RCMP for character clearance on applicant and manager, if different.

10. Manager: should be an older person capable of maintaining good control over premises.

11. Rules: Imperative that operator set out in notice form on premises, realistic house rules dealing with dress code; conduct code; hours of operation; age restriction of patrons, if any; separation of hours by age; consumption of food and drink on premises; no loitering; smoking. Such notice should be conspicuously posted on two locations within the premises.

12. By-law: Advise applicant that at the present time there is no by-law governing the hours of operation of arcades or age of patrons. However, they should understand that Council has looked at the operations of arcades and indicated that, if necessary, they are prepared to enact a regulatory by-law. It should be clearly understood that the responsibility to maintain the operation at a satisfactory level so as to avoid complaints or nuisance to surrounding businesses or other persons, rests with the operator.

13. Approval of licence: The last step leading to the approval of licence is meeting between the applicant, the Licence Inspector, a representative of the RCMP and the Special Youth Officer attached to the School Board. The applicant must come forward with a written copy of their house rules. General discussion will centre around these rules and responsibility of the operator to maintain control within the premises vs. the RCMP control outside the premises. Discussion will also cover presence of school age children during hours when school is in session.

14. Final approval: Following advice from Planning, Health, Building and Fire Departments that the premises comply with the applicable regulations and confirmation that the operator and manager have received a negative check from the RCMP, the licence is issued. 1982 cost: 1st year, $400, renewal rate, $215.

P. Kenzie
CHIEF LICENCE INSPECTOR

1982 March 08

C-2(h)

NO. 81-100

A BYLAW OF THE CITY OF VICTORIA

to regulate and control the conduct of billiard room, pool table and pinball machine operators.

WHEREAS it is provided by Section 18 of the "Victoria City Act, 1919" that the Council may pass bylaws for, amongst other things, inspecting, regulating, governing or controlling the conduct of and the premises in which certain classes of business mentioned therein may be carried on, including the businesses of keeping any premises where a billiard table or pool table is used for hire, compensation, or profit, and the business of using an automatic or slot machine for the purpose of vending amusement by making the same available for operation by other persons;

AND WHEREAS it is provided in Section 526 of the "Municipal Act" R.S.B.C 1979 c.290, that the Council may by bylaw regulate the carrying-on of business within the muncipality, to the extent not inconsistent with the intent of the "Municipal Act" or any other Act, for the purpose of protecting the public or preventing or minimizing nuisances, and may make different regulations for different classes of business;

AND WHEREAS it is provided in Section 527 of the "Municipal Act" that the Council may by bylaw prohibit for all or defined parts of the muncipality the operation of any public pool room, billiard hall, cabaret, skating rink, bowling alley, dance hall or other place of amusement;

AND WHEREAS it is in the public interest to regulate and control the conduct of amusement establishments;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the City of Victoria enacts as follows:

1. This bylaw may be cited as the "Amusement Establishments Control Bylaw".

2. The "Interpretation Bylaw, 1974" applies to this bylaw.

3. In this bylaw "amusement establishment" means a building or room or physically segregated area in which the principal business conducted is the provision of one or more billiard tables or pool tables or pinball machines, or other amusement-vending automatic or slot machines, or any two or more of the said categories of business.

4. This bylaw does not apply to premises forming part of a fair while the latter is in progress, nor to any premises in respect of which there is a subsisting licence issued pursuant to the Liquor Control and Licensing Act.

5. No person under the real or apparent age of 17 years shall be employed in connection with an amusement establishment or permitted to enter or be in an amusement establishment at any time, between the hours of 7 o'clock in the afternoon and 7 o'clock in the morning.

6. If any person under the real or apparent age of 17 years is employed in connection with an amusement establishment or enters an amusement establishment then, until the contrary is proved, the person holding a licence from the City for the purpose of operating the amusement establishment and every person employed by him in connection with the amusement establishment shall be deemed to have employed or to have permitted the person under the real or apparent age of 17 years to enter or be in the amusement establishment.

7. No person, who operates either a business for which a trades licence is required under the provisions of any bylaw of the City, or an amusement establishment, shall place, have, suffer, or keep on the premises of such business or amusement establishment either more than 2 pinball machines or more than 2 amusement-vending automatic or slot machines that are not pinball machines.

8. Any person who contravenes any provision of this bylaw is guilty of an offence and liable upon conviction to a fine not exceeeding $1,000.00 or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding 30 days or to both such fine and imprisonment.

9. The licence of any person who carries on the business of an amusement establishment shall upon his conviction of an offence against this bylaw ipso facto be suspended, and shall not be reinstated unless the City Council directs that it be reinstated.

10. Bylaw No. 7316, cited as the "Amusement Establishment Control Bylaw, 1977" is repealed.

Passed and received third reading by the Municipal Council the 26th day of August, 1981.

Reconsidered and adopted by the Municipal Council the 10th day of September, 1981.

"C.F.G. CRISP"
CITY CLERK

"W.D. TINDALL"
MAYOR

No. 81-138

A BYLAW OF THE CITY OF VICTORIA

to amend the Amusement Establishments Control Bylaw to allow the keeping of up to 4 amusement vending machines.

The Municipal Council of the Corporation of the City of Victoria enacts as follows:

1. This bylaw may be cited as the "Amusement Establishments Control Bylaw, Amendment Bylaw (No. 1)".

2. Bylaw No. 81-100, cited as the "Amusement Establishments Control Bylaw" is amended by repealing Section 7 and substituting for it:

> "7. No person, who operates either a business for which a business licence is required under the provisions of any bylaw of the City, or an amusement establishment, shall place have, suffer, or keep on the premises of the business or amusement establishment more than 4 amusement-vending automatic or slot machines, no more than 2 of which may be pinball machines."

Passed and received third reading by the Municipal Council the day of , 1981.

Reconsidered and adopted by the Municipal Council the day of , 1981.

CITY CLERK MAYOR

APPENDIX D-1

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

The Research and Evaluation Unit of the Ministry of the Attorney General now has a file including:

1. Current municipal CVGO bylaws for some 15 B.C. communities;
2. Decisions in several Supreme Court cases;
3. Copies of all references cited in this study;
4. Copies of several hundred media articles on CVGO's, and;
5. A Community Relations Manual for the Coin-Operated Amusement Games Industry.

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POOR

QUALITY

ORIGINAL